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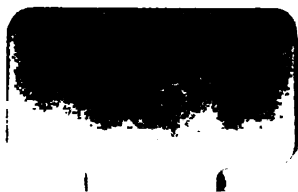
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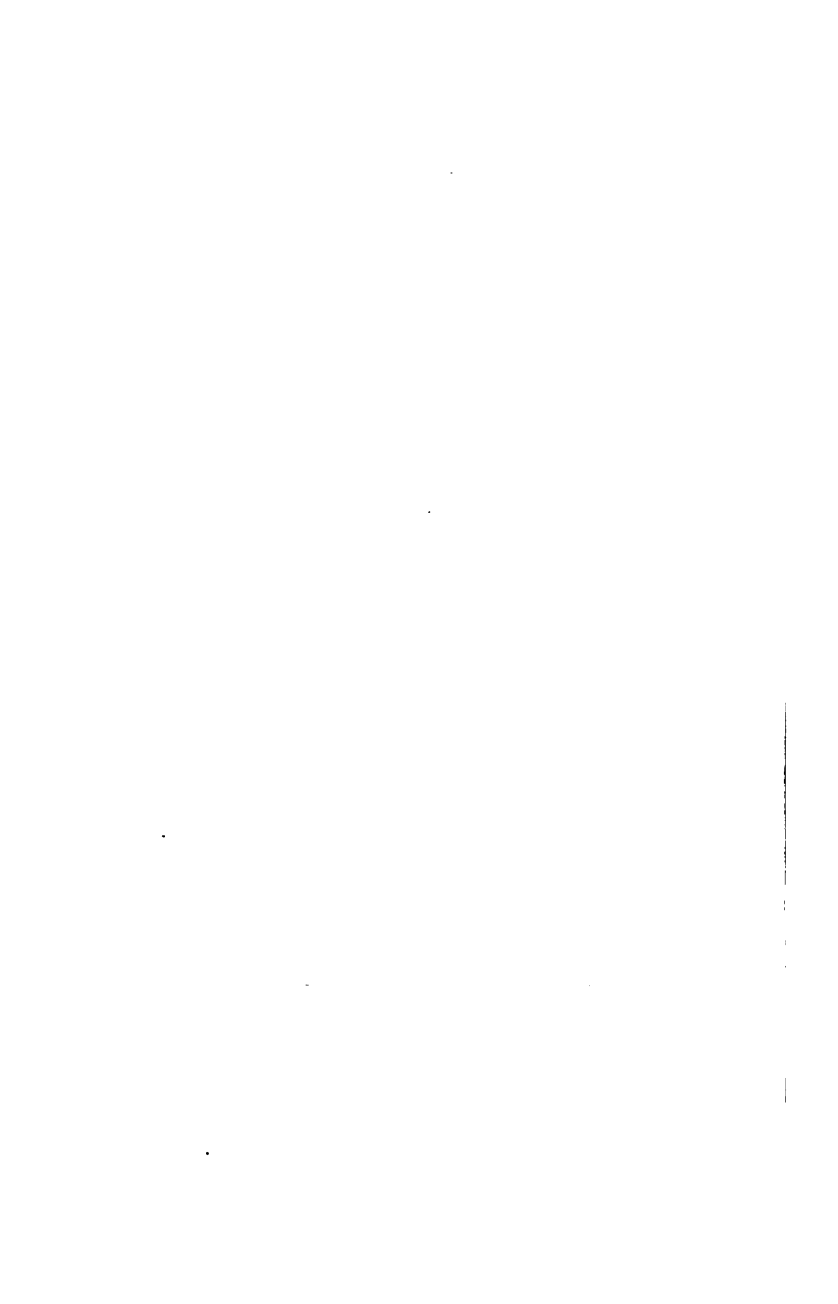
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MDCCCLXIII.



HOMELY.

PART I.

**HOME-
CHARACTERS.**

**MR. WELBORN.
MRS. WELBORN.
MRS. PRY.**

PART II.

LY.

**COLONEL MARVEL.
CAPTAIN VAUNT.
MR. CAUSTIC.
MRS. SIMPLE.**

PART III.

HOMELY.

**LADY FASHION.
LADY ALMACKS.
MR. HEARTY.
MRS. HEARTY.**

PART I.



*A handsomely furnished drawing - room in town,
with nick-knucks scattered about in profusion.*

*Enter Mrs. WELBORN, with an open letter in her
hand. She sinks into an easy chair, settles
herself in a graceful attitude, then reads aloud,
remarking on what she reads.*

Mrs. W. "I am sure, my dear niece, you will be delighted to hear that your cousin Emily is on the point of making an excellent match." Not I, indeed, my dear aunt ; you give me credit for greater affection, or folly, than I possess. I should not have a grey hair the sooner if my cousin Emily were to make no match at all. Match, matches !—properly named, beginning in bustle and light, ending in darkness and ill odour.

[*Reads again.*] "A good a match as your own, my dear Susan." That may easily be. What does a good match mean? Marrying a man who spends all his money on himself, all his time at the House, or his club—or somewhere else; who rejoices at an increase in his stud, and grumbles at an increase in his nursery; who can always find gold to pay horse-dealers and tailors, but never a grain to pay milliners or housekeepers; who vows to love, and cherish, and endow with his worldly goods, yet shuns, or scolds, and keeps all his worldly goods to himself; and his wife's too, if he can get at them. They talk of love in a cottage,—I wonder if there ever was such a thing beyond three days! I am sure there is no love in a house, though, if common report speaks true, there is in a palace:—a queenly luxury not to be enjoyed by subjects, I conclude. Yet so it is; the single wish to get married, whilst the married would fain be single. It would be of no use to advise her. Who heeds warning or advice? So now for a flaming letter of congratulation, full of the happiness of wedded life, &c. If the bird that left its tail in the teeth of grimal-kin had declared she liked the sensation, every bird that flies would have followed her example, instead of laughing at the sufferer. But here comes Henry, and in no pleasant mood, I guess, by his heavy step.

Enter Mr. WELBORN, who throws himself on a sofa, without speaking to his wife.

Mrs. W. Are you ill, my dear?

W. Yes.

Mrs. W. Shall I send for Doctor Hare?

W. No.

Mrs. W. What ails you, my dear?

W. [*yawning.*] I am tired.

Mrs. W. Not of me, for you have not been an hour in my company for the last two days.

W. The House sat late last night.

Mrs. W. Was my cousin Pierrepont's a good speech?

W. Yes; he always speaks well.

Mrs. W. He told me this morning that he had not spoken at all; nor seen you at the House.

W. [*in slight confusion.*] I could not stay at the House all the time. — I should have been tired to death. I saw Darrel there.

Mrs. W. He saw you just look in, and go out again.

W. I had promised to meet Pitman at the club.

Mrs. W. How unfortunate! He waited for you there three hours, and then came hither to learn where you were.

W. [*aside.*] Idiot! — That is always the way with appointments: two persons are never punctual. It does not matter.

Mrs. W. Oh ! dear me, not in the least. It cannot matter whether you were at the House, or the club, or listening to a hurdy-gurdy in the street ; enough, that you have returned at last, so your friends need not be at the trouble of setting the police to search for you. Strange if the Lords of the creation may not go where they please, say what they please, and do what they please !

W. I am no Jerry Sneak, madam, to be called on to give an account of my in-comings and out-goings.

Mrs. W. Certainly not, my dear ; we are only discussing your short-comings. But who is Jerry Sneak ? One of your friends at the House, or your club ?

W. He was a hen-pecked husband ! — a mean-spirited wretch ! who went no where, and did nothing without asking his wife's leave.

Mrs. W. Dear me, what a nice husband ! I wonder if there are any such in the present day : I should like such an one for our eldest daughter if there were ; but I fear the race is extinct — only to be found as an antediluvian fossil.

W. Side by side, with an economical, obedient wife.

Mrs. W. Talking of economy, my dear, puts me in mind. Will you give me some money to pay those bills ? [*She points to a heap on*

the table.] Madame de Trop, not having been paid these two years, is getting impatiently clamorous; and the butcher, baker, and grocer (vulgar creatures!), whom we cannot however do without, presume to grumble. Then the governess has absolutely had the boldness to ask for her salary—the children all want new summer dresses—I have nothing fit for the next drawing room—the curtains in my boudoir are as faded as a country beauty at the end of her first London season; and—

W. [*half starting up and stopping her.*] No more, I hope.

Mrs. W. [*carelessly.*] Only one or two more trifles.

W. Trifles, madam! do you call these trifles? where do you suppose the money is to come from?

Mrs. W. From the same place, my dear, as that which is to pay for your new phaeton, double-barrelled gun, pair of horses, and brace of pointers. You would not be less liberal to your wife and children than to yourself?

W. [*provoked.*] This is always the way, madam; you leave me no comfort at home, yet storm if I go abroad.

Mrs. W. Comfort at home, my dear! I could not imagine you expected that. I thought home was the place where the women and children

of England eat cheap dinners, and drank made wines; and where the men returned, when they could find nothing better to do, to grumble and scold.

W. Do not provoke me too far, you know not what may be the consequences.

Mrs. W. I see you are flushed and feverish. Let me recommend the cold water system.

W. Cold water, madam! you always keep me in hot water.

Mrs. W. I thought you were boiling over, my dear.

W. Do not call me my dear, whilst doing all in your power to drive me mad.

Mrs. W. [*with pretended simplicity.*] Drive you mad! I was only asking for some money to pay your bills, and save your credit.

W. Money! yes, money! you are always asking for money. It is the same cuckoo-cry from morning to night. Do you suppose you married a golden calf?

Mrs. W. Better perhaps if I had: that would have supplied my wants without murmuring.

W. A thousand golden calves could not supply your extravagance: look there! [*pointing to the elegant toys on the table, and brackets.*] How should there be money to pay butcher, and baker, when you spend hundreds on toys, fit only for children? No fortune can stand it—

no temper can endure it. What was the cost of this? [*holding up one of the toys.*]

Mrs. W. About the tenth part of the cost of your last new hunter.

W. Always throwing that in my teeth; men must have good horses, like others.

Mrs. W. Women must have their dresses and rooms like other people's.

[*W. in anger is going to sweep the toys from the table, when his wife stops his arm.*]

Mrs. W. Do not storm, my dear. I hear Mrs. Pry on the stairs. She was envious of our marriage, and would gladly spread the tale of your *brouillerie* from east to west.

[*Mr. and Mrs. WELBORN reseat themselves, and prepare to meet their visitor with smiles.*]

Enter Mrs. PRY.

Mrs. Pry. Oh! my dear Mrs. Welborn, I am so delighted to see you looking so well and happy; and Mr. Welborn, too, I declare.

"Like King William and Queen,
You *tête-à-tête* are seen."

Who would have thought of that? What will the world—our world, say to this?

Mrs. W. That domestic bliss is coming in with the summer fashions; we wanted something new this year.

Mrs. Pry. New indeed ! why you have been married these ten years.

Mrs. W. The very thing : ten years' apprenticeship should make us perfect.

Mrs. Pry. And are you going to play the perfect husband ?

W. [*bowing politely to his wife.*] How can I do otherwise to a perfect wife ?

Mrs. Pry. Well this is as it should be. [*aside*] I wonder if it is all true. But it is so strange—so different from what I expected. To be sure there is no believing reports ; but I had heard that Mr. Welborn was never at home, and that you never met without sparring.

Mrs. W. You can notify to all the world that Mr. Welborn is sometimes at home ; and that you saw us together, and heard no uncivil speeches.

Mrs. Pry. Well, there is no believing any one. Then I may tell the world that you are a very happy couple.

W. Tell the world what you have seen, your evidence will go farther than our assertions. Depend upon it, Mrs. Pry, there is no place like home.

Mrs. Pry. [*turning in surprise to Mrs. Welborn.*] And do you say the same ?

Mrs. W. Precisely, there is no place like home [*glancing archly at her husband*].

Mrs. Pry. [*with an affected laugh.*] Well, I am very glad to hear it; very glad, of course, only it is very strange people should say that Mr. Welborn was never at home. Good morning, I am delighted to see you so happy. [*Aside, as she goes out.*] I wonder if they really are so happy, or whether they are shamming to tease me! [*Exit Mrs. PRY.*]

Mr. W. [*muttering.*] Happy!

Mrs. W. [*sighing.*] Happy!

Both. No place like home! that was true at any rate, in one sense. [*A pause.*]

W. How well you looked, my dear, whilst talking to that gossip; as well as when we married.

Mrs. W. Did you think so? You looked like the Henry of former days. [*Another pause.*]

Mrs. W. I was thinking—[*She stops and looks at her husband.*]

W. And I was thinking too, my dear, that if you always looked and spoke so cheerfully, I should be more at home. Sharp words and gloomy looks send many a husband roaming.

Mrs. W. And grumbling tones, and frowning brow, bring many a wife to death, or desperation. The sun cannot shine out amid fog or storm.

W. You can smile to hide vexation from others.

Mrs. W. Was I the only one who smiled?

W. No ; smiles beget smiles. If we seemed happy to provoke another,—why not be happy to delight ourselves ?

Mrs. W. I ask no better : but how shall we begin ?

W. Give me a smiling welcome home, and I shall find the club-house dull.

Mrs. W. [*archly.*] Art sure ?

W. Quite sure.

Mrs. W. Will you not rave if I but name a bill ?

W. [*writes and gives her the paper.*] Does that content you, Susan ?

Mrs. W. It shames me, rather ; I have done you wrong ; thinking you selfish and unkind.

W. And I have done you wrong ; so now we will right the balance, and hold on the even tenor of our way ; we will have smiles at home, as well as when abroad ; your hand upon the bargain—thus :

Mrs. W. Most readily [*they join hands*]. I will say no more of club, or phaeton, or gun.

W. Nor I of woman's talent for extravagance and teasing ; we will drive together in the phaeton, and bring in, as you said, a happy married life, as a new summer fashion.

Mrs. W. Agreed ; and close this matrimonial duet, by singing in concert : "There's no place like home."

[*Re-enter MRS. PRY in haste, looking eagerly round.*]

Mrs. Pry. I think I left my bag behind.
[*Aside*] I made sure I should have found them quarrelling.

Mrs. W. I cannot see it.

Mrs. Pry. Then I must have left it at home.
[*Exit in haste and vexation, whilst Mr. and Mrs. W. sing,*

“There’s no place like home.”]

PART II.

Enter COL. MARVEL, CAPT. VAUNT, MR. CAUSTIC,
and MRS. SIMPLE.

Mrs. S. Oh ! Colonel Marvel, have you read Mr. Ranger's new book of travels ? I hear, it contains such wonderful things.

Col. M. No doubt, my dear Mrs. Simple ; these pen and ink people are rare hands at invention. They must have a talent for it, or they would never get on in the trade ; books must contain wonders, or no one would read them : but some do the thing so clumsily. One author out-Herods Herod, or rather out - Munchausens Munchausen ; whilst another preludes, with a flourish of trumpet and drum, a tale of a spider, that would not cause a school girl to open her eyes. Those civilians, mere book-makers, tied to their publisher's apron - string, can know

nothing of the real wonders of the world — nothing of the catch-breath, stand-up-hair adventures of a military man of spirit ; who has been in all the four quarters of the globe. Why, I would wager the splendid sword given me by Muley Abdallah Ibrahim Futteh Khan, for saving himself, and all the ladies of his Harem, from the ferocious Shah Sing Sing, that I could tell more wonderful tales than any author, living or dead.

C. No one can doubt your ability to tell wonderful tales.

Col. M. Thank you, Caustic ; this is the first civil speech you ever made me in your life.

C. [*drily*] Is it ?

Col. M. This very saving Muley Abdallah Ibrahim Futteh Khan and his ladies was one of the most extraordinary adventures that man ever had. There did I, with my own arms, on my own horse, carry off first Futteh Khan, and then fifteen — let me see—yes, fifteen of the ladies of his harem, one after the other ; in sight, yes, absolutely in sight, and in spite of, the ferocious Sing Sing, and his whole army ; composed of no less than eighteen hundred effective men, besides camp followers, &c. Fine women, some of them—quite houris ; and how the little dears clung to me, when the balls whizzed all round and about ; they were not used to them

as I was. Would you believe it ? one ball passed through my whiskers, and carried off the turban and veil of the Sultana behind me, leaving her lovely face exposed to view. She was the light of the Harem.' Fancy never pictured anything so beautiful. Such eyes ! they were as if the brightness of a hundred thousand diamonds was concentrated in them.

C. Or a hundred thousand gas lamps.

Col. M. Exactly, Caustic.

C. I wonder the lustre did not blind you.

Col. M. It did, to a certain extent ; to this day, I am often obliged to wear a green shade in consequence.

Mrs. S. [*holding up her hands.*] Wonderful !—Is not it ?

C. Marvellous !

Mrs. S. Did you do it all yourself, whilst the eighteen hundred men were all firing at you ?

Col. M. I brought off the ladies single-handed, I may say ; for there were only about twenty of our fellows keeping the course clear for me, as I galloped to and fro. Such a hissing of balls ! it was like being in a marsh full of serpents.

Mrs. S. Wonderful ! And did none of the balls hit you ?

Col. M. They riddled my clothes in all directions, but I had not a single wound. Fortune favours the bold ; and Sing Sing's fellows,

thinking I had a charmed life, set me down at last as one of their Hindoo, or Mahommedan, divinities. The fact was, my good horse bore me so swiftly to and fro that they took us for a flash of lightning, and were dazzled. Unequalled horse that !—a perfect Hypogriffe !

C. And unequalled rider, too ; both should be stuffed, and kept in the British Museum.

Col. M. That might do for a mere man of science ; but a tomb in Westminster Abbey, and a public funeral, with military honours, would be mores uitable for me.

Mrs. S. Were the ladies very grateful ?

Col. M. [*simpering.*] Ah ! my dear Mrs. Simple, it was sad work !—one of the most melancholy days of my life when I quitted Muley Khan. They were only too grateful. All wanted to be Mrs. Marvel, and fifteen wives would not do in a christian land, and I an officer in her majesty's service ; and to have chosen one would have broken the hearts of all the rest. My friend Muley behaved exceedingly well, and did all he could to detain me ;—but, finding that my stay would endanger the peace of his domestic life, I held it a duty to depart after a tender leave-taking of the ladies, who showered on me such a profusion of tears and jewels that I was well nigh drowned and smothered ! Muley offered, if I would turn Mohammedan, to make me his heir,

and divide his wives with me fairly, tossing up for the odd one, the charming Fatima.—I should have been most unreasonable to expect him to do more.

C. [*drily.*] Most unreasonable.

Mrs. S. How very kind of Muley Khan. I declare that beats anything I ever heard of in Mr. Ranger's book,—though they do say one of the daughters of one of the Shahs, or Beys, or something, fell in love with him, and offered to have him proclaimed her father's successor.

Col. M. A lie! my dear madam! depend upon it a lie!—these pen and ink people are always vaunting their deeds, and fancying that ladies fall in love with them.—Shah's daughters are not so plentiful or come-at-able as sloes in a hedge-row, or goose-quills on a common, or there would not be so many poor authors as there are. Never believe the book-makers! the plain unvarnished tale of an honest soldier you may rely on. The ladies of the East are only to be won by extraordinary bravery!

C. Such as exhibited by yourself in saving Muley Khan and his harem. But where may your equal be found?

Col. M. [*much gratified.*] You flatter me, Caustic! I declare you are growing quite polite. I merely told this trifling anecdote to prove the wonders met with in a soldier's life.

Capt. V. [*who has been some time in a fidget, and anxious to speak.*] Whatever wonders there may be in the life of a soldier, there are more in the life of a sailor.

C. Right, Captain, right! stand up for your profession! If there are marvels on land, there are vaunts on the sea. Have not you some story of the deep to out-do Muley, and his harem? [*aside.* It is nuts; filberts to a civilian to hear army and navy out-lying each other.]

Capt. V. That have I, Caustic, many and many a tale,

“ More strange than Marvel's there, and quite as true.”

tales that would make a whale look astonished, and a sea-horse sentimental! only I have a horror of boring my friends, as some men do, about myself [*glances at Marvel*]; and running the risk of being thought a romancer. However, as the Colonel has endeavoured to make it appear that only military men have wonderful adventures, I will just tell you a little thing that happened to myself, in the year eighteen hundred and — let me see — what was the exact year?

C. Oh! never mind the year; but be quick; and let it be a good story, for I see Marvel is impatient to begin again. Go like a steamer to the point at once: no tacking hither

and thither, letting go one sail, and reefing another ; no nautical terms to prove your knowledge and our ignorance ; and no names nor dates to awaken discussion. [*Aside.* One must stint him, or he would spin a yarn that would reach from Liverpool to New York.]

Cap. V. Here goes, then ! Fancy our vessel, with every sail set, going right before the wind, making twelve knots an hour, when suddenly a sand bank, as it seemed, rose up at right angles before her, and she struck upon it 'ere the steersman had time to port the helm. The shock was so great that several of the men were thrown down by the concussion,—a great deal of the crockery was broken, and the good ship herself shivered and shook like a strong man in an ague, whilst her timbers cracked and groaned like a pirate's gibbet on a windy night. Each man stared in his neighbour's face ; for no reef, or sand-bank was traced on the chart, and none had been there when we passed but a fortnight before. We rubbed our eyes ; but still there was the low dark line extending to the right and left, as far as the naked eye could see ! The lead was cast beside it, and the line run out, yet no bottom found ! The ship was put about, and a boat lowered and manned to examine the bank more closely. We rowed parallel to it for two miles, yet it seemed the

same, only growing larger as we advanced. We touched it with our oars—we touched it with our hands; and then the cry arose,—The kraken! the kraken! As I stood up to obtain a better view, a sudden lurch of the boat threw me into the sea, and a wave bore me on to the monster. I climbed on its back; hurrah! there was I bestriding the kraken. I was but a youngster then, and saw more fun than fear in my position. I ran along on the monster, but it did not stir; only a hollow noise grew louder and louder as I advanced—it was the animal snoring.

Mrs. S. [*in astonishment.*] Snoring!

Capt. V. Yes, snoring, my dear Mrs. Simple; snoring away like fifty thousand giants! We took it for a hurricane at first!

Mrs. S. Well, indeed! I thought a kraken was a great sea-snake, only seen by Americans; and I did not know snakes ever snored.

Capt. V. I should be ashamed of myself if I could not see whatever the Americans can; and as to snakes snoring, my dear madam, there are many of the wonders of the deep of which landmen and landswomen can know nothing.

C. —

Ye gentleman of England, who live at home at ease,
How little can ye know of the wonders of the seas.

Capt. V. Exactly so.

Mrs. S. And how long did the kraken sleep?
And what did it do when it woke?

Capt. V. It slept about an hour, just till I got within a few yards of its head ; and then it woke with a tremendous yawn, causing such a whirlpool as would have swallowed up a seventy-four, had one been there.

Mrs. S. Well ! only think ! And what then ? Did it swim away ?

Capt. V. No ; it drew its tail round to scratch its nose, and then, after sporting about, lay with its tail in its mouth, just as you see fried whiting sent to table ; and there was our ship in the centre, like a frog in the middle, unable to get out. We fired some 24 pounders at it ; but the shots only rebounded.

Mrs. S. And how did the vessel get out at last ?

Capt. V. Oh ! after some time, as the creature did not seem inclined to move, I slipped off its back, swam to the ship, and offered to fire a ball right into its eye. Some laughed at the thought ; but the captain bade me try, keeping the ship out of the way of its plunging. I am not one to do things by halves—the ball went in at one eye, and right out at the other. You might have heard the creature howl at the Cape of Good Hope ; and it lashed the sea for a while till it was white with foam for miles, and then down it sank, and our ship dashed on again before the wind.

C. The Liar was the name of the ship, I think ?

Capt. V. The Lyra, you mean. The captain and crew considered that they owed their lives to me.

C. How very unfortunate that you and Colonel Marvel should not have been rewarded according to your merits.

Capt. V. That is the way of the world ; rank and interest carry the day against modest worth.

Mrs. S. Well, that is a wonderful tale ; it beats yours, Colonel Marvel.

Col. M. Oh ! what I told you before was a mere nothing. Nothing to what I have seen and done in India and elsewhere ; as for krakens, some count them fabulous monsters.

Capt. V. Seeing is believing.

Col. M. [*Significantly.*] I never saw one. [*aside, to Caustic.*] If that is not a —, I don't know what is. I was out hunting once in India, Mrs. Simple, indeed, I was considered the best hunter there, killed one thousand elephants, five hundred tigers, one hundred and fifty wild boars, and sixty alligators, in one year. Well, as I said before, I was out hunting once in a deep jungle, and had just shot one tiger, my fourth that day, right through the head, when the man who carried my second gun, crying out that there was another coming, took to his heels, a cowardly fellow, leaving me to take care of myself. Not

having time to re-load my gun, I could do nothing but run off too, which I did with all possible speed. I am a most extraordinary runner—can tire down two wild horses in a day—and, now I knew that I was running for my life, I seemed to outstrip the wind; yet I heard the tiger come nearer and nearer. I knew there was a hut in the neighbourhood—could I reach that, and close the door, I might be saved; but just as I came in sight of this hut, a wild elephant rushed out of the jungle, and stood exactly in my path. I tried to turn aside, but my foot caught in the high grass, and I fell. A tiger behind—an elephant before—I gave myself up for lost. I saw the elephant stretch out his trunk to seize me—I could almost feel the hot breath of the tiger on my neck, and expected the next instant to feel its claws. It made its spring, but, overleaping its mark, fell right into the open jaws of the elephant; and such was the force of the leap that his head was driven so far down the elephant's throat as to choke him, nothing but the tip of his tail being in sight. Thus my two foes lay dead at my feet. The tiger's skin covers my sofa at Marvel Hall, and I had a superb set of chess-men cut out of the tusks of the elephant. It was considered a most wonderful escape.

C. Unparalleled! a thing unknown in the memory of man!

Capt. V. [*aside to caustic.* If that is not a —, I don't know what is.] That is certainly rather a wonderful story, Colonel; but some things have happened on the sea quite as extraordinary, and attested by the most trustworthy witnesses. Was there any one present when the tiger choked the elephant?

Col. M. [*warmly.*] My run-a-way attendant turned round at the moment, and was aghast at the sight!

C. [*drily.*] So I should think. You have told me wonders, gentlemen, of Asia, and the sea, yet, great as these wonders are, I have seen a greater in this little Island of ours.

All together. Indeed! What is that?

C. Why neither more nor less than two asses trying, *à l'envie l'un de l'autre*, which could roar most like a lion, quite unconscious that they did but bray the more discordantly, awakening ridicule, instead of approbation.

Col. M. I don't find any thing so wonderful in that; you may hear it any day.

C. That is the very thing that makes it the greater wonder. Come, Vaunt, have you no story to out-do the elephant and tiger?

Capt. V. Oh! a thousand. I remember once we were run down by a frigate in full sail. She passed right through us, leaving a clear gang-way in the middle of our ship, the two remain-

ing parts only connected by the keel. We gave ourselves up for lost, but, a most extraordinary thing—

Col. M. [*looking at his watch.*] Bless me! I had no idea it was so late. I am sorry I cannot stay to hear the end of your story, but the Duke is expecting me at the Horse Guards; and I should not like to keep him waiting longer—it is not respectful at his age; besides, my advice may be the saving of the country. Good morning.

[*Exit COL. MARVEL.*]

Capt. V. [*in vexation.*] Caustic, that is a—lie. The Duke wait for him, indeed!—He save the country!—Why, he is only half saved himself. I know what sent him off in such a hurry; he was afraid my story would out-do his. You shall not lose it, at any rate. Now the fore and aft of the vessel being only connected by the narrow keel, if one half had weighed but a quarter of an ounce heavier than the other, it must have sunk, and we should have been all lost; but—a most extraordinary thing—they were balanced to a pin's point—the same number of men—the same number of boys;—and so we floated triumphantly into harbour, amid the shouts of assembled thousands, to the wonder of all.

C. So I should think. How fortunate that you had the same number of fat and thin

people on board, or the balance might have been destroyed, and no Vaunt left to tell the tale !

Mrs. S. [holding up her hands in astonishment.]
Dear me, how wonderful ! Such things never happened to me, or any of the Simples. How clever of the captain to divide every thing so equally ! Did he weigh you first, or do it by guess ? I can never guess even the weight of a piece of meat.

Capt. V. I beg your pardon, my dear Mrs. Simple, but I have not time to answer your questions now. The Lords of the Admiralty are waiting for me, to give them instructions on the art of ship-building ; and, as I may be one of the Board myself ere long, I must not treat them with disrespect. Good morning.

[Exit VAUNT.]

C. [looking after him.] That is a — lie. He one of the Lords of the Admiralty ! land *versus* water. The jury could not agree in their verdict ; and, after being locked up-eight-and forty hours, were discharged. Good morning.

[Exit CAUSTIC.]

Mrs. S. [holding up her hands and murmuring as she goes out.] So it is all a — lie !

PART III.

A London drawing room. LADY FASHION seated in an easy chair with a note in her hand, looking around with great complacency.

Lady F. All arranged to perfection. I flatter myself not even Lady Almacks' critical eye will be able to detect a fault in me, or my boudoir. How have I toiled to obtain the honour of this visit! but my labour will be all repaid, since to be on her visiting list is a card of admission everywhere. How kind of Lady Hunter to give me notice of this visit, that I might have all prepared for her reception; and how clever of myself to offer to procure her the Saxony pug she was dying for; without that she might only have left her card—now she must come in to thank me. To be sure the pug will be a great trouble and expense—but one must pay something for admission into the highest society.

No one knows that Sir Thomas was a brewer at Carlisle, and only knighted for taking up an address ; for he wishes to keep his origin secret as much as I do ; and, having bought a few acres there, he can talk of his landed property, and pass for a country gentleman. And who could suspect the elegant and accomplished Lady Fashion of being the daughter of Firkin, the grocer ? Faugh ! I hate the thought. Lucky that my eldest sister who married the foreman died ; it is not so easy to keep vulgar brothers and sisters out of the way as cousins, and such like. I have had some trouble to get quit of uncle and aunt Hearty, who brought me up, and had me educated for a governess ; but I managed cleverly at last ; and they think me still abroad for my health. I must not break with them entirely, for they have money to leave, and London is very expensive—but they must not come here for the world : their vulgar warmth of affection would blight all my hopes of getting into the Court circle. [*A loud knocking at the door.*]

Ha ! here comes Lady Almacks—that drapery is not well arranged [*she alters the folds of the curtain, and then glances at herself in the glass.*] I have too much colour—look flushed and flurried. How unlucky ! the aristocracy are generally pale. Shall I deny myself to visitors, that

I may have her all to myself, and insinuate my hopes under delicate flattery? No; better let all come, that they may see my distinguished guest. But I must not seem expecting her.—
[*She reseats herself, and snatching up a book, pretends to read.*]

[*Enter LADY ALMACKS announced in a most pompous style, and received by Lady Fashion with what she considers, mingled ease and empressment.*]

Lady F. I am delighted to have the honour of seeing your Ladyship—

“The glass of fashion, and the mould of form.”

Lady A. [*politely seating herself in the splendid fauteuil, provided especially for her.*] Are you literary, Lady Fashion? I should judge so by your quotation, these scattered papers, and gold pen.

Lady F. I play with pen and ink occasionally. Really, since literature has become the fashion, one is so pestered to have one's portrait put in the book of beauty, and contribute to the annuals, that it is less trouble to comply than to refuse. Authors are not the poor wretches they used to be; I would not have written then on any account, but our aristocracy write now, and there is no disgrace in inscribing a few exquisite lines with a gold pen, on embossed paper. Your Ladyship, I believe, pays homage to the Muses occasionally.

Lady A. No, Lady Fashion ; all my homage is reserved for the Graces. I do not require the pen to bring me into notice. There is a tinge of vulgarity in seeking after such fame, which better accords with a *parvenue* than one of the *élite*.

Lady F. I perfectly agree with your Ladyship. High society should be kept free from all the vulgar pursuits of those in a lower grade ; but really with cheap education and cheap silks, there is no maintaining the distinction of classes in the present day.

Lady A. Cheap silks and cheap education will not make a woman of fashion ; high caste and early training are required for this. The jewels of the East could not save an unworthy intruder into our circle from discovery and shame ; nor the dress of a kitchen-maid conceal one of the privileged.

Lady F. I perfectly agree with your Ladyship ; there is no possibility of concealing low birth and vulgarity. I am quite miserable when I go down into Cumberland at the society there ; indeed, I live as secluded as I possibly can, consistent with Sir Thomas's station in the country as a landed proprietor. Better, in my opinion, no society, if not of the highest. And then to see the vulgar country cousins some otherwise respectable people drag about with them. Thank

goodness, Sir Thomas and myself were only children; and our parents so before us.

Lady A. [languidly]—Fortunate indeed: relations are often troublesome. I came to thank you, Lady Fashion, for your promise to procure me the Saxony Pug. One is tired of Scotch terriers, Blenheim spaniels, and French lapdogs; every one has them: one wants something new;—new pleasures and new minds too, to enjoy them. The world has grown very dull. I hope it will not give your Ladyship much trouble.

Lady F. I count nothing a trouble that enables me to oblige your Ladyship.

Lady A. [languidly.] You are very good.

Lady F. [taking up a print, representing Lady A. in a fancy dress, worn at the Queen's Masque.] I was admiring this last night; but now I see its great injustice. The painter's art may give the features; but who shall give the grace? the engraver's art, I should rather say; for I have not had the pleasure of seeing your Ladyship's portrait painted by Chalon. [*Aside.* This is well added, and must bring an invitation!]

Lady A. I suppose not, as it hangs in my boudoir. You should see that to judge. Let me see—next week—there's Wednesday—[*pauses, as if considering.*]

Lady F. [aside.] She means to invite me to

her grand party on Wednesday. This will be a triumph.

[A noise is heard on the stairs, and Mr. and Mrs. Hearty burst into the room unannounced, breaking from the servant, who endeavours to detain them.]

H. *[flushed and boisterous, throwing his arms round Lady Fashion, who, with a faint scream, endeavours, but in vain, to avoid the embrace.]*
Ah! Susy, my dear niece, how are you? Such a tramp as we have had after you! First to your lodgings in Golden Square, where I recommended you; and then to your lodgings in the Strand, and then here, and there, and everywhere, till at last I found you out. But even then it was as much as I could get at you, for those impudent varlets of yours would not believe I was your uncle, forsooth, and tried to prevent my coming up stairs, because I got out of an Omnibus. "Sich a getting up stairs!" Haw! haw! haw! as if a Buss wasn't good enough for old John Hearty, the retired woollen draper? Here, let's have another kiss, Susy, before I give you up to my old woman, who is longing to hug you. Well, you are none the worse in the face for London air, that I can say. As rosy as ever; just like the red peony in the flower bed afore our windows. Then your jackanapes said something about a fine lady with you, as if

I should eat a fine lady, or a fine lady eat me.
Oh! there she is—servant, my lady.

[He bows profoundly to Lady Almacks, who returns the salutation by a stately inclination of the head.]

Mrs. H. *[hugging Lady Fashion, who seems utterly confounded by the mal-à-propos entrance of her relations.]* Oh! Susy dear, I am so glad to see you again. I have not set eyes on you these four years. I thought at first from your letter that you were still in *furrin* parts; but Jack Wilcox declared he saw you driving about, dressed like a queen; and so we was resolved to come up and see you, though every body laughed at homely John Hearty and his wife going up to *Lunnon*.

H. *[in a whisper to Lady Fashion, pointing to Lady Almacks, over his shoulder.]* I say, Susy, who is that? She is a fine woman; but she don't look over healthy, poor thing. Why, her cheeks are as white as though she had been diving for a bullet in a meal tub. And I suppose she is lame too, poor thing, as she did not get up when I bowed, but that may be *Lunnon* ways. What is her name?

Lady F. *[recovering in some degree from her confusion, and endeavouring to stop her Uncle and Aunt from further questions.]* Hush! hush! she

is in the first society ;—the queen of society it may be called :—a Countess in her own right.

H. [*breaking from her, and staring at Lady Almacks.*] Really one of your tip top fashionable ladies ! then I must have another look at her. Here, Molly, is one of the fine ladies we read of in the books sometimes. Very kind and condescending to call on our little Susy.

Lady F. [*vexed and confused.*] No, no. Don't stare so—it is rude [*trying to detain him*].

H. Oh ! but I must have another look ; we homely country folks can't see such sights every day. Not but what she is pretty much like other women, only whiter and more fainty like.

Lady F. [*in vain endeavouring to conceal her growing annoyance, and trying to get her relatives out of the room.*] The Countess did me the honor of calling on me, to talk over a little matter of business ; if you will just go into the drawing-room, you will find it much more comfortable.

H. No, no, Susy ; I am very comfortable here [*looking around*]. It is a very nice room—a very handsome room. Who could have thought of your having such a fine room ? and horses and carriages, and all, they tell me.—Why I remember the time, before we took to you, when you were running about with bare

feet, thankful for even a bit of bread. Ah! your father was a sad, low fellow. But, I say, I hope you are not going on too fast; for I know Thomas did not leave business with more than forty thousand pounds. Don't go to make strangers of us, and put us in the grand drawing room; this is quite snug enough for us; we are but homely people, and pretend to no more. There, it is of no use making nods and signs, and all that sort of thing, for I won't budge—that's poz. This seems a nice comfortable chair, and I am tired, running half over the town after you. There, Molly, you take the other chair, and then we shall be as happy as the Queen and Prince Albert themselves. Only to think, as I said before, of your having such a fine house as this, and such fine company too; and you only a Grocer's daughter!

Lady F. [with nervous eagerness.] You forget the business with the Countess. I entreat you to go into the drawing-room for a few minutes.

H. Nonsense, Susy, don't make a fuss, child; two such pretty ladies can't have any treason to talk, so you need not mind us homely folks. But I say, Susy, I am monstrous hungry. Could not you just tell that fine varlet of yours out there to bring me up a little summut? You need not trouble the cook to dress a chop, or any thing of that sort; for I suppose

She is busy about the dinner, and it might put her out; let them bring us up some bread and cheese with a glass of beer, some of the same sort of beer as your husband used to make, before he was knighted and gave up the brewery: you know what sort I mean, Susan; so let us have it, my dear, instead of standing there like a duck in thunder.

Lady F. [*in despair.*] I know nothing of what you mean. [*Aside to Lady A.*] The man is mad. [*Aside to Hearty.*] Go into the next room directly, I entreat, implore you—If you stay here, you will be my ruin.

H. [*aloud.*] Ruin, Susy!—Why, what do you mean? To be sure you have not been gambling (I hear some of the women in *Lunnon* do), and lost money to that fine-looking Lady there.

Lady A. [*aside.* No, she has only lost caste.]

Lady F. [*more eagerly.*] No, no. Do go.

H. Susy, I smell a rat. You would not be in such a flurry as all this for nothing; I won't budge an inch till I know what all this business is about. As your uncle, I have a right to know.

Lady F. Only about a dog.

H. Only about a dog! Then I won't stir a step. What can you have to say about a dog that I may not hear? [*Turning to Lady*

Almacks.] Talk, on my Lady, never mind me, and I will make myself comfortable the while.

[*He arranges the cushions, and settles himself deeper in the chair.*]

Lady A. [*rising to take leave, with a languid smile.*] I will not intrude on you further, Lady Fashion, as you must have many things to say to your affectionate relations, whom you have not seen so long. As for the dog, if your Ladyship will let me know of its arrival, I will send for it immediately, and enclose all the expenses of its journey.

Lady F. I am sorry [your Ladyship should think of going so soon. [*Aside* Better if she had never come at all, as matters stand] As for the dog, I beg your Ladyship will give yourself no trouble about that:—I hope to have the honour of presenting it to your Ladyship in person.

Lady A. [*with great decision.*] I cannot think of that, Lady Fashion; you must allow me to send for it. Good morning.

Lady F. [*following her to the door and apologising.*] I am grieved, shocked, Lady Almacks; that you should have been so much annoyed by those—those—those—vulgar people. I shall dismiss Taunton immediately for letting them in. The fact is, the man is mad, raving mad;

and so has taken up a fancy, a most extraordinary fancy, that he is my Uncle, with a thousand other odd fancies too. Very strange, is not it? [*Laughs affectedly.*] I did not dare contradict him, lest he should become outrageous, and do your Ladyship some injury. He must be sent to a mad-house.

Lady A. [with an ironical smile]. Very considerate. Good morning. Pray do not attend me any further, or your relations may become more outrageous. If you wish to see Chalon's Portrait, I shall be out of town the week after next, and the house-keeper will show it you.

[*Exit LADY ALMACKS, leaving LADY FASHION the picture of vexation and despair.*]

Lady F. [to herself.] So no invitation to her party, though I am sure it was on her lips :—not even let me go with the dog.—House-keeper show me the picture, indeed! Insolent! —And what a chilling air, as she swept out of the room.—I have lost all chance of admission into fashionable society, for I saw she did not believe a word I said. And all the doing of that vulgar old fellow.

H. [stepping forward]. Meaning me — me, your kind old Uncle, who saved you from starving, and brought you up like my own child. You ungrateful bit of vanity!—trying

to pass off for a born fine Lady. And I am mad—must go to a mad-house ! Should be if I staid here any longer, after all this. Here, come along, Molly ; we won't stay one minute longer under her roof ; a hollow-hearted minx ! And I tell you what, Molly ; we will leave all our money to the County Hospital.

Lady F. [trying to detain him.] No, no ; stop, my dear Uncle, it is all a mistake—you know how much I love you. I was speaking of some one else to the Countess :—you do not understand.

H. [breaking away.] Yes, I do understand, Lady Fashion ; better than you desire. We are homely, too homely for you ; and you are ashamed of us. Come along, Molly.

[Exeunt the HEARTYS.]

Lady F. [with passion] Homely indeed !—
[Stamping in anger.] Lose party, and fortune too.—This is too much ! *[Goes out, muttering,*
Homely—Homely—indeed !]

BACKBITING.

PART I.
BACK-
CHARACTERS.

RASHLEY.
AUNT TABITHA.

PART II.
BITING.
HON. PERCY SHUFFLETON.
DULLHEAD.
SERVANT.

PART III:
BACKBITING.

MR. SHARP.
MR. SMART.
MR. SHY.
MRS. GABBLE.
MISS GABBLE.

PART I.

Enter a LADY with cloak, bonnet, and veil. After taking one or two turns, as if wandering among winding paths, she seats herself with her back to the door, keeping her veil down, and her eyes fixed on the ground.

Enter RASHLEY, who, after taking a short turn, stops, looks round, as if he had lost his way, then speaks.

Rash. If the paths of virtue are straight, as my most moral, and, with all due reverence be it spoken, most prosy, aunt is accustomed to observe, then is this not a virtuous path, twisting hither and thither, as though the favourite highway of a serpentine descendant of the great tempter to evil. Oh ! it is a beautiful path ! as the sentimental-looking girl, whom I encountered at the entrance, observed to the languishing youth on whose arm she leant. Most beautiful ' if the crooked is the line of beauty,

as artists asert. Turn to the right—then to the left—go straight forward—then take two turns to the right—and then three to the left; and you are out in the road to Money Hall, as the old pincushion woman assured me at the corner. Out in the road! yes, I am out in the road, that is certain; and how to get in again I know not, having turned to the left and the right, and the right and the left, till the only right way left seems the way back; and how to find that I cannot tell, having twirled round like a tee-to-tum, till I know not whether I look before or behind me. Bless me! there is the clock striking two, and I ought to have been with Miss Dash-away, the great heiress, half an hour ago: this comes of taking short cuts. As the old proverb says—The shortest way round is the longest way about. But then I was afraid of meeting my prosy aunt Tabitha if I kept the high road, for, were she to know of my being at Wrexton, it might lose me her favour, and—more—her fortune. It was a capital plan, my shutting the front shutters, and bidding them say I was gone down to my mother's; but for that, I should have been obliged to listen to my aunt's prosy stories, that have beginning and middle, but no end; and drive up and down with her at the rate of two miles and a quarter per hour, instead of winning the dashing heiress. A plague on

these labyrinthian walks ! that impudent puppy O'Grady, with his Irish blarney, will be there before me, and carry off the prize ; and then let but aunt Tabitha learn how I have fooled her, and disinherit me in consequence, and I am done for. Which way shall I go ? Right and left seem only to lead deeper into the maze. Shall I spin round once more, like a teetotum, and see which way my face shall point ? If I could but see that demure and most sober-looking lady of a certain age, whom I marked but now in the distance ; no doubt she would set me right. Ah ! there she is, and fortune smiles once more. Never despair ! Now for the heiress and aunt Tabitha's savings (she will be sure to leave me her heir if I do not need it), and all good things beside.

[He approaches the lady, who continues immovable, keeping her back towards him, whilst he addresses her.]

Your pardon, madam, but I should feel much obliged if you would direct me to Money Hall. What, no reply ! not even a sign of having heard me ! Why the old girl must be deaf. What a nuisance deaf women are ! Now to halloo in her ear like a hundred thousand speaking trumpets. By the gong of my great uncle the nabob, I will be heard, and the old tabby shall answer too !

[*He advances close to the lady, and shouts in her ear.*]

Madam, ten thousand pardons for disturbing your delicious reverie, but I have unfortunately got out of the road to Money Hall, and shall feel myself infinitely obliged if you, in your wisdom, will condescend to set me right. [*Aside.*] She must have heard that—I am too cross to palaver.

[*The lady turns slowly round, and fronts him, throwing back her veil.*]

Aunt Tabitha, by the powers! [*Starting back in confusion.*]

Aunt T. Ay, aunt Tabitha! prosy aunt Tabitha! whose stories have beginnings and middles, but no end. Capital plan to shut the front shutters and bid your servant say you were gone down to your mother's, that you might escape the drives of two miles and a quarter per hour, and win the heiress. So the old girl is deaf, and you will shout in her ear, like a hundred thousand speaking trumpets, and make her put you in the right way:—you are in the wrong way now, sure enough. The old tabby may have had quicker ears than you desire. I will put you in the right way—Return as you came. Miss Dashaway has promised her hand to Captain O'Grady; and your prosy aunt Tabitha will leave all she has to your cousin; so for once her story has an end.

Rash. [*in much confusion and stammering, whilst he endeavours to appear at ease.*] My dear aunt, how capitally you carry on the joke. Ha! ha! ha! so true to nature. One might really fancy that you were not acting, and did not know that I was jesting all the time. I never suspected you of possessing such a talent for the stage; you beat Miss Tree out and out. And I—I flatter myself, I did my part capitally too—might have taken in any one who did not know me as well as yourself; nay, even you, I think, dear aunt, were a *leetle*, a very *leetle*, doubtful just at first.

Aunt T. Not at all doubtful. I know you well now. Hypocritical time-server, out of my sight! By the gong of your great uncle the nabob, you shall not inherit one sixpence from me. This story, at least, shall have an end.

Rash. My dear aunt, you are jesting—carrying on the joke with spirit, ha! ha! ha! But a joke may be carried too far. My dear, good aunt, I cannot endure even the semblance of anger from you: you from whom I have ever received such kindness, for whom I have ever felt unbounded love and reverence. Lean on me, and we will laugh over this jest as we walk home.

Aunt T. You may find it no laughing matter. Begone!

Rash. But, my dear, kind aunt, you whom all love for your goodness, and respect for your wisdom, only just hear me. [*Catching at her cloak.*]

Aunt T. Not a word—not a syllable. You are in the wrong road—go back as you came. I leave my fortune to none but those who do not need it—you do. Begone!

[*She snatches her cloak from his grasp, and turns her back upon him in anger. He makes an effort in dumb show to appease her, but in vain, and on her waving her hand to bid him begone, turns back the way he entered, in anger and vexation.*]

Aunt Tabitha—prosy aunt Tabitha, indeed!

[*Exit.*]

PART II.

Enter SHUFFLETON, fashionably dressed, with several papers in his hands, one of which he is perusing.

Shuf. So ; another dun ! and a pressing dun too, who will hear no reason—take no denial. Large family—sick wife—sudden calls, &c., &c.—the old story ! What right have such fellows with sick wives and large families ? Tradesmen should never marry till they have laid by enough for such luxuries, without embarrassing their customers. But this is the age of extravagance ; the lower orders aping their betters, till fashionable delinquencies have become vulgar vices, and there is no being *récherché* in sin, any more than in waistcoats. Hard times these for young men of spirit. What is to be done ? This impudent knave insists upon being paid, and I have not a *sous*. That a thing made up of small savings,

and little gains; a living two-legged stool behind a counter, should presume, not only to ask, but to demand, money of a gentleman! As if it were not honour enough to serve the Honourable Percy Shuffleton—for nothing! To be threatened with an execution—imprisonment—exposure—by a low-minded tradesman; and all for a paltry debt of twenty pounds! The blood of the Shuffletons is fever heat at the insult; and the wit of the Shuffletons must bring relief. Ha! I have it.—Here comes Dullhead. I will sell him my pointer for twenty pounds—or more. He is rather wild, but exercise is good for young men; and if he should be going to have the distemper, as the groom thought this morning, the sooner the better for me; he will be of no use then. To be sure Dullhead has little style; but then he has less wisdom, and an ardent longing to be one of us, and do as we do; so I can work on this taste. Ugh! the *parvenu* aping his betters, as if he could ever be aught to the *haute-noblesse* but their *laquais*, butt, or money-lender. It is a duty to punish such pretension, and his pocket shall pay the penalty.

Enter DULLHEAD.

Ah! Dullhead, how are you? I was just needing advice, and you seem sent to give it. It is not every one whom I would consult, or on whose opinion I would rely. What do you

think of Lord Princetown? You spent a week with him at the Moors, I believe.

Dull. Proud — stingy — not at all what you expect of a lord — an insignificant looking little man — no style. [*Drawing himself up conceitedly.*]

Shuf. Oh! I remember now — he refused you a seat in his carriage, and was haggling about the price of that fine hunter, which you bought at once over his head. By the way, I doubt if he ever got over the mortification, or forgave you for inflicting it. He looks as black as thunder whenever you are named. Proud, stingy fool! as if, in this commercial country, a wealthy commoner, who is free with his money, is not a fit associate for a poor lord with a hundred quarterings. A pinching *parvenu*, who cannot, or will not, spend freely, is another concern; and should be cut by all good fellows. But now for your advice. Princetown has offered me five - and - thirty guineas for Ponto. You know Ponto; my famous pointer, allowed, by all good judges, to be the best dog in England.

Dull. Was he? I thought the Duke threatened to shoot him.

Shuf. Yes, out of vexation, if I let Princetown have him. [*Aside.* Hang the fellow's memory.] Why the Duke offered me sixty guineas for him last year.

Dull. Did he indeed?

Shuf. Ay; but I would not part with him then. [*Aside.* Ha! ha! the simpleton begins to nibble. If I throw in a few more titles, I shall have him presently.]

Dull. Is the Duke to have him now?

Shuf. He is in his yacht in 'The Bay of Biscay, oh!' on his way to Greece; and they do not do things in Attica as they do in old England—know nothing of sporting there. Poor place! Then there is the Marquis of Dryburgh would be glad to take him at any price, if he were not going abroad for the health of his lady, or replenishing his purse. It is shabby of Princetown to make me such an offer, just because he knows I must go with my uncle to France, so cannot shoot this year; and, thanks to being cleared out at Ascot, am rather hard run for cash. It is just like him—he is stingy to the back-bone, and proud, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot. No real gentleman would take advantage of such a moment to try and drive a bargain.

Dull. [*Eagerly.*] Have you sold the dog to Princetown?

Shuf. [*Aside.* It works—he will be on the hook in a minute.] Not yet; and he shall not have it for that; but it is so disagreeable to be haggling with such a mean-minded skin-flint:

besides, Lord Charles and his cousin declare it is a shame that Ponto should belong to any but a capital shot; it would be throwing him away, for Princetown never hits more than one in seven.

Dull. [*more eagerly.*] Did Lord Charles say this?

Shuf. Yes; and offered to back you against Princetown now, and bet ten to one on you, though his lordship has been practising for the last three months. Lord Charles is a good judge. He says you will make a capital shot, and deserve good dogs.

Dull. Yes, he is a good judge, and a fine noble fellow, too; an honour to nobility. You have not closed with Princetown, have you?

Shuf. [*Aside, triumphantly.* He is on the hook—a little more, and he will be fairly or unfairly caught.] No, no; this haughty heir of the princely Princetowns, who despises all without sixteen quarterings at the least, must open his purse-strings wider yet. If it were not for my poverty, and attendance on my uncle, he should not have Ponto at any price. The stingy wretch! I would rather sell him to a man of spirit and liberality for forty, than to such a Jew for sixty.

Dull. I will give you forty. It would be a shame to sell Ponto to such a man.

Shuf. It would, and you are just the master

I should have chosen for him among a thousand. Liberal men always make kind masters. But Princetown has set his heart on the dog, I hear. I hope he will not be savage when he finds that you have stepped in and bid over his head; for, skin-flint as he is, he has the *entré* into the best society, and might do you some damage there. He is to call in half an hour; if the thing were all settled, and the money paid, he could blame none but himself. How mortified he would be!

Dull. It is all settled; I will give you a draft on my bankers immediately.

Shuf. Here, then! [*placing an inkstand before him.*] You are a man of spirit, quite one of us. But, stop, will you not see the dog first? I should not like people to say I had wheedled you into buying a pig in a poke.

Dull. I am not a person to be wheedled, or taken in, and that all the world knows: I always judge for myself. No need to see Ponto now. I rely on you as a friend.

Shuf. [*With pretended indifference.*] As you please, only remember I have made the offer, and never warrant horses or dogs. [*Aside, whilst Dullhead is writing.* Idiot! I knew that last turn would barb the hook; I am too experienced an angler to let my prey escape with only a nibble!]

Dull. [*Fidgeting.*] Pounds, of course; there are no guineas now?

Shuf. Not among the vulgar herd, or on vulgar money tables; but *we* always make it guineas. [*Aside.* Mean wretch! would be a miser but for his vanity. What a world this is! He would have done me out of forty shillings if he could. How long he is writing the draft—I am getting nervous.]

Enter SHUFFLETON's Servant in haste and alarm.

Serv. Sir! sir! Ponto has gone mad, and bitten the groom.

Shuf. No such thing, fool! Hold your tongue. [*Glancing at Dullhead to see if he had heard, and making an angry gesture for the man to be silent.*]

Dull. [*Starting up.*] Hey, what is that?

Shuf. [*Assuming indifference.*] Nothing. Have you written the draft? [*Holding out his hand to receive it.*]

Serv. It is not nothing, sir. Ponto is mad for certain, and has bitten the groom in the leg; and there, sir, there he runs, and all the people after him, and the house-door open! Be sure he will make for here.

[*The Servant runs out in great alarm, his terror having made him utterly heedless of his master's frowns and signs to be silent.*]

Dull. Hey! Ponto mad, and coming this way; then I shall be off too. [*Runs off, taking the draft.*]

Shuf. [*Following.*] Ay; and off his bargain

too, I fear — just when I had caught him so cleverly. A plague on the dog ! If he had but waited till to-morrow, he might have gone mad a hundred times over, it would have been Dull-head's loss then. Now who is to pay this dun ?

[Exit, in anger and vexation.]

PART III.

*Enter MRS. and MISS GABBLE, MR. SHARP,
MR. SMART, and MR. SHY.*

Mrs. G. Oh! my dear Mr. Sharp, have you heard the news? Miss Fox is going to be married.

Sharp. [*interrupting her.*] To Mr. Goose—more goose he.

Mrs. G. [*laughing.*] No, no, my dear Mr. Sharp; not Goose, but Roose.

Sharp. Ay, I knew there was a *ruse* in the business.

Mrs. G. La! Mr. Sharp, you are so very quick. But it was such a droll courtship—you have no idea.

Sharp. I doubt their having one between them.

Mrs. G. Oh! yes, they have a great many odd ideas; only think of Miss Fox's falling into

a sand-pit, and Mr. Roose falling in after her ; and their being obliged to be dug out. Ha ! ha ! ha ! I am sure I never laughed so much in my life. And then they do say that the offer was made there ; and that the gentleman—

Sharp. Ran his fox to earth, in proper sportsman-like-style, and then dug her out : I suspect he will find her a vixen after all.

Smart. Ah ! Sharp, the grapes are sour. But gossips report that the lady refused to have any thing to do with A Sharp.

Sharp. Preferring to strike A natural — a natural indeed ! always laughing.

Smart. Let those laugh who win.

Sharp. The fox may find that the grapes are sour ; that his winning may prove a loss, for he has nearly run through all his fortune, and the lady's expectations less than expected ; it was the discovery of this which induced me to decline becoming a candidate.

Smart. The world says you kept up an assiduous canvass, till after the issuing of the writ, when your principles became more fully understood ; you desiring cash payment and free trade, whilst the lady was a conservative, and preferred a monopoly.

Sharp. [*In anger*] the lady's friends have long tongues—and some long ears.

Mrs. G. Yes, some people say she will have thirty thousand pounds; but I do not believe a word of it. Her father was never such a very rich man; and has been very extravagant in his time.

Sharp. And a great gambler.

Miss G. And I am sure Selina Fox is no such great beauty, with her turn-up nose.

Sharp. And large mouth.

Mrs. G. And little eyes.

Miss G. And then she is such a flirt.

Mrs. G. Ay, that she is; running after all the men—I am quite ashamed of her.

Smart. She need not do that, as all the men are running after her.

Mrs. G. Only because they think she will have thirty thousand pounds; there is nothing else in her, I am sure. We used to see a good deal of her at one time; but she has nothing to say for herself; and as for her mother—she is the most stupid person I know. Never tells you anything—never says more than she can help; is so silent—so tiresome—so dull. I hate people who never talk, don't you, Mr. Shy?

Shy. [*stammering and stepping back in confusion.*] Oh! y-e-s, certainly—people should talk.

Mrs. G. I was sure you would agree with me. People should talk; how can one learn any thing, else? If all were as silent as

some, the whole town might be married and buried and no one the wiser. Talking of marriage, Mr. Sharp, have you heard that Mr. Touchet has ordered a new carriage; and consulted his tailor about a wedding coat, in the expectation of marrying Miss Hare?

Sharp. As Mrs. Glasse observes — let him catch his hare before he dresses it.

Mrs. G. Then you don't think she will have him? Well, I should not wonder, for he is very plain.

Sharp. It is very plain that he is down-right ugly.

Mrs. G. So he is; and mean, and insignificant looking.

Miss G. And I am sure she is no beauty.

Smart. Not without paint; but her portrait in the exhibition makes her little short of an angel.

Mrs. G. Oh! any one can look a beauty on canvass, if they will but pay for it. I really wonder at the audacity of so many sticking up their portraits to be stared at by all the world, and pulled to pieces, and found fault with.

Smart. They prefer being abused before their faces to behind their backs.

Mrs. G. So you really think, Mr. Sharp, it will be all off between Mr. Touchet and Miss Hare?

Sharp. Are you sure it has ever been on?

Mrs. G. Why, I am not quite sure; but I always get the best intelligence I can. They do say, Mr. Touchet's father was a shoemaker; perhaps Miss Hare may object to that.

Sharp. That would be the last objection she should make; her own father having been a currier.

Smart. Then depend upon it "it is all leather and prunella."

Mrs. G. La! Mr. Smart; you are always saying such droll things. And they do say that Mrs. Hare was a washerwoman.

Smart. Then no wonder her daughter should wash her hands of her lover.

Mrs. G. Mrs. Hare is a very disagreeable woman; so sharp—so close about her own concerns—so curious about every one's else's; then she is not at all particular about what she tells of others; but repeats all the reports she hears, whether true or not. By the way, Mr. Sharp, have you heard that Mr. and Mrs. Hope have quarrelled about an apple dumpling, and separated?

Sharp. Indeed! it is to be hoped not.

Mrs. G. They say it is a fact. She would have it baked, and he would have it boiled. And they have only been married six months; and a love-match too. I never expect much

from your love-matches ; there are other things more material.

Smart. Some philosophers hold love to be immaterial ; whilst others deem it material, at least as an ingredient, in matrimony.

Sharp. Is it a regular separation ?

Mrs. G. So I was told ; but it was in confidence. They do say that he threw the dumpling in her face. And only married six months ; how shocking ! “ But when poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window.”

Smart. However great the evils of poverty, the lady had hope remaining in this case.

Sharp. She seems to have found hope but a poor consolation ; I should like to know whether he has really departed. What a capital caricature of six months after marriage—playing ball with hot dumplings !

Smart. Nothing new ; many have burnt their fingers with matrimony. But I should like to know the truth of this story.

Mrs G. So should I. Indeed I think it a duty we owe to society to learn the truth of such reports. They used to walk on the terrace together every day ; one might pick up some intelligence there, at any rate.

Sharp. Capital idea ! suppose we all adjourn thither.

Mrs. G. [To Mr. Shy, who has looked red and alarmed during the whole of the conversation.]

Won't you come too?

Shy. [stammering.] Presently, ma'am — I will follow. *[Exeunt.]* Then looking after them, and seeming to shrink into himself. Mercy on us, what tongues! It will be my turn next. If that is not backbiting, I don't know what is.

[He follows the others out at some little distance, with a timid, frightened air.]



CANDIDATE.

PART I.

CANDID-

CHARACTERS.

MR. CANDOUR.
MR. SELF.
MRS. SELF.

PART II.

DATE.

MR. THOMPSON.
MRS. MORDAUNT.
MRS. PHILIPS.

PART III.

CANDIDATE.

HON. MR. PLAUSIBLE.
HIS FRIEND.
MR. DRAPER.
MRS. DRAPER.
CHILD.
MR. STURDY.
STUBBORN.
CYNIC.
TIMID.
VOLUBLE.

PART I.

Enter MR. CANDOUR, and MR. and MRS. SELF.

S. Well, what do you think of my improvements, Mr. Candour? You must see a great change since you were last here.

C. Yes, a change indeed! You have made many alterations; but alterations are not always improvements, and some changes are for the worse.

S. Oh! some changes, certainly; but mine, I flatter myself, stand not in that category.

C. Most people flatter themselves.

S. At least you do not flatter them.

C. No, I am a plain spoken person, and make it a point of conscience always to tell the truth.

S. I know you do, my dear Mr. Candour, and therefore I prize your approbation

above that of others. Come, tell me how you like the house.

C. To be plain with you, then, not at all: I like comfort, not show.

S. Comfort, my dear sir! where will you find a more comfortable apartment than the breakfast-room? I planned and executed it myself.

C. And should be condemned and executed yourself for so doing. You know I always speak the truth. I make it a matter of conscience to say what I think. The ceiling is too low, and the windows too small.

S. Quite a mistake, Mr. Candour, I assure you. The room is in admirable proportion, and I have the most correct eye in the world. I have been cheated so often that for the first time I determined to be my own architect.

C. Then take my advice, and let it be the last time, as well as the first. To be candid, your talents do not lie that way.

S. [*Aside, in anger.* A fault-finding old dotard! delights in saying disagreeable things, which he calls telling the truth. Who wishes such truth? But I must honour him, for he is a distant cousin, and has a large fortune at his disposal.] [*Aloud.* Well, let the breakfast-room pass, though I cannot agree with you, but what do you say of the dining-room?

C. It is so far from the kitchen that the dinner will get cold on its way ; and cold meat is only pleasant on the three broiling days which form an English summer.

S. Excuse me, my dear sir, but you don't understand these things, not having built a house yourself. I planned the dining-room purposely at a great distance from the kitchen, to avoid the scent of the cooking ; there is nothing worse to a person of delicate olfactory nerves than the smell of roast meats.

C. Except the taste of half-cold ones : it would be the death of a *gourmet*.

Mrs. S. But, my dear little boudoir, Mr. Candour ;—is not that a love of a room ?

C. Do you mean the closet at the end of the long gallery ? To be plain with you, I took it for a china cupboard.

S. Ay ; you were so much struck with my beautiful china that you could look at nothing else. Did not you think my monsters darlings ?

C. I thought them monstrous.

S. Ah ! my dear Candour, you do not understand these things ; but my drawing room—is not that a fine room ? All must think alike of that. Thirty-five feet long !

C. Since you ask my real opinion, I must give it, for I make it a point of conscience always

to tell the truth. I concluded you meant it for a gallery, not a room; it is a mere line—a length without breadth.

S. [*In vexation.*] You have a most singular taste. Every one else who has seen it admires it exceedingly. I planned it myself—there is not such another room in the whole county.

C. It is to be hoped not.

S. Pooh, pooh; my dear Candour, you must have forgotten which was the drawing-room.

C. Very likely; for Theseus himself, with the aid of Ariadne, could not thread your labyrinth of passages. To tell the truth, your house puts me in mind of a bundle of walking-sticks thrown down at random, and lying about in every direction—long, straight lines, with knobs at the end.

S. [*Aside.* I wish the sticks were laid across his back.] [*Aloud, with a forced laugh.*] Ha! ha! Candour, that is very fair for a joke; you must have your jest, I know.

C. I never jest, but always make it a matter of conscience to tell the truth.

Mrs. S. Ah! there is my little boy; you have not seen him, Mr. Candour?

C. Yes, Mrs. Self, I saw him just now.

Mrs. S. Is not he a fine little fellow?

C. Yes; very little for his age.

Mrs. S. Little, Mr. Candour ! why we count him large for his age. Don't you think him exceedingly like his father ?

C. To tell the truth, Mrs. Self, I think him much more like your pug.

Mrs. S. Oh, Mr. Candour ! how can you say so ?

C. My dear madam, you know I always tell the truth. You have not shown me the grounds, Self ; and I remember them in your father's time.

S. They are very different from what they were then. I have modernized them on an entirely new plan of my own. I have turned the walk, as you see—given it a most graceful curve—every one says it is a wonderful improvement.

C. I am sorry I cannot agree with every one—that turn is to me like the contorted twist of a wounded snake. I think the walk much better as it was. You know I always tell the truth—I am very sincere.

Mrs. S. [*Aside.* Very ill-mannered, and totally devoid of taste.] Ah ! Mr. Candour, I see you are of the old school.

C. Yes, Mrs. Self ; the good old school, which in my opinion is far superior to the new one. But it is late, and I promised Stanton to give judgment on his new horse ; he knows I never flatter, but always make point of telling the plain truth. Good morning. [*Exit.*

S. Give judgment indeed! he has not a grain of judgment in his whole composition.—No taste—no manners—the rudest, most ignorant person of my acquaintance. Ay, and the most unpopular too. If it were not for his fortune, he would not be tolerated. Saying bitter and malicious things under the plea of candour and telling the truth. Ever finding fault. My house like a bundle of walking-sticks!—long lines with knobs at the ends! and that turn like the twisting of a wounded snake! Ha! ha! ha! [*forcing a laugh.*] It is too ridiculous to make one angry.

Mrs. S. And calling my boudoir a china cupboard. And saying the baby was like a pug. Well, if this is candour, I do not admire it.

S. Taking my drawing - room for a gallery—a line—a length without breadth, indeed! Well, if that is telling the truth, I would rather hear lies. There is the gardener; I must just go and give him directions about that flower bed.

Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. Self, muttering as they go.

That turn like a wounded snake—the baby like a pug.

PART II.

*Enter MRS. PHILIPS, MRS. MORDAUNT, and
MR. THOMPSON.*

P. So Miss Carter is really going to be married at last! It has been a very long engagement, I understand — fifteen-years—time enough to change.

T. Ay, and change back again too; but she cannot have been engaged so long.

M. You should know best, being her cousin; but I was told, as a positive fact, that the offer was made at the election ball, given in honour of Mr. Mordaunt's being chosen member by a large majority for the county of Wilts.

T. Let me consider, and then I can tell you the exact year. When I was abroad in 1819, Caroline Carter was not out.

P. Well, Mr. Thompson; but that is more than twenty years ago.

T. I know that, Mrs. Philips; but I was going to make out her age. When I was abroad in 1819, Caroline Carter was only a girl; but a very intelligent girl. She would sit by my side for hours, coaxing me to tell her of all I had seen in foreign lands.

M. She might have been a girl in 1819, and yet engaged at the election ball, as I have been informed. The ball was given in honor of Mr. Mordaunt's being elected member for the county of Wilts; and there was a larger attendance of county families than had ever been known before on a similar occasion.

T. It may have been, and doubtless it was, a very splendid election ball, Mrs. Mordaunt; but I cannot see how the full attendance of the county families can be considered any part of Caroline Carter's being engaged. When I returned from abroad in 1819, my cousin Carter consulted me about Caroline's education. Let me see;—she cannot have been engaged more than ten years and three quarters.

M. Well, I am sure I was told fifteen years; the whole room was talking of it at the ball, when my husband was elected member for the county of Wilts. You can answer for that, Mrs. Philips.

P. Oh, yes! I remember it was just about the same time when my eldest daughter

married the Earl of Dunbally; and the Duke of Hereford came up to congratulate me on my gain, and the county's loss, as he politely termed it.

T. I assure you, ladies, you are mistaken; Caroline Carter cannot have been engaged more than ten years: for I remember, when I was abroad in 1819, hearing that she had caught the measles.

M. I know nothing about the measles; but she was certainly dancing away at the ball given in honor of Mr. Mordaunt's being elected member for the county of Wilts. You must remember that, Mrs. Philips; your husband having been one of the numerous gentlemen who escorted him into the town.

P. Oh! yes, I remember perfectly; it was just about the time when my eldest daughter married the Earl of Dunbally, and the Duke of Hereford, when he came up to congratulate me on the county's loss, as he politely termed it, remarked that young Marshall was trying to console himself by flirting with Miss Carter. Poor young man, he is just dead, I hear—only six and thirty; but they are a short lived family—his father died at nearly the same age.

T. I assure you, Mrs. Philips, you are quite mistaken there; Frederick Marshall must be more than six and thirty, for when I re-

turned from abroad in 1819, I remember meeting him in London ; and he was then just come of age.

P. I beg your pardon, Mr. Thompson ; but his aunt is one of my most intimate friends, and I know his age to a day. He was just one and twenty when my eldest daughter married the Earl of Dunbally !

T. [*aside*. Foolish 'Tuft-hunter ! dating every thing from the marriage of her eldest daughter with a penniless, spendthrift, Irish earl.] I am sorry to differ from you, my dear Mrs. Philips, but dates are things about which I am very particular ; there can be no certainty of any thing without exactitude of dates ; and I can assure you, as a positive fact, that when I returned from abroad in 1819, young Marshall was just of age.

P. [*aside*. Prosy old bore, spent one week at Boulogne ; and now refers every thing to when he was abroad.] I am sorry to differ from you, Mr. Thompson ; but I assure you I am as particular as to dates as yourself ; and I perfectly remember when my eldest daughter married the Earl of Dunbally, and the Duke of Hereford came up to congratulate me on what he politely termed the county's loss, his Grace remarked that young Marshall was trying to console himself by flirting with others, which would establish the fact of his having arrived at years of discretion, without the aid of the

parish register. You must remember this, my dear Mrs. Mordaunt.

M. Oh ! perfectly ; it was said at the ball given in honor of my husband's election for the county of Wilts.

T. [*aside.* What foolish vanity ! dating every thing from her husband's election, the effect of wholesale bribery, proved by his accepting the Chiltern Hundreds within three months, to avoid an exposé, less palatable even than a Chancellor of the Exchequer's.] It may seem rude to dispute your authority, ladies ; but facts are stubborn things ; and dates must not be falsified. The whole truth of history hangs on the correctness of dates. I feel certain young Marshall was of age, when I returned from abroad in 1819. I only wish the register could be appealed to ; we could thus settle the question.

P. That may easily be done, for he was born and christened in this very parish. [*Aside.* I am sure I am right.]

T. Shall we go and examine it at once ? [*Aside.* I am sure I am right.]

M. By all means. [*Aside.* I am sure I am right.] [*Exeunt all, speaking together.*]

M. When my husband was member for Wilts.

T. When I was abroad in 1819.

P. When my eldest daughter married the Earl of Dunbally.--

PART III.

Enter MR. and MRS. DRAPER, and CHILD.

Mrs. D. Oh! my dear, have you heard the news? Mrs. Figgins tells me that there is a third gentleman going to stand for Goldborough. Only think—three! and but one can be member. And they say he is such a handsome man, with rings, and brooches, and mustachios; and quite as polite as Lord Flatter, at the last election.

D. Mrs. Figgins will cry up any one who praises her children; and his lordship did say such things to her great, gauky girl, I was quite shocked to hear him; making her mother believe he thought her an angel. I should have turned him out of the house if he had attempted to say such things to a daughter of mine; and then making the silly creature suppose that he wished to ask her husband for his

advice. His advice, indeed—he only wanted his vote. Why Figgins is quite a poor honey, ruled by his wife; and his lordship knew that; and the silly woman would swallow any thing. It is always the way with your low people who have risen from nothing; and she was keeping a small toy-shop when Figgins married her, to the wonder of many. His lordship did not come and talk such nonsense to me: he knew better: he did not even canvass me, knowing that I was purple to the back-bone; and one of Newton's committee. Depend upon it this new member (don't he wish he may get it?) is just such another palavering sprig of fashion, since Mrs. Figgins likes him. I do detest that woman. She plotted and plotted to catch Mr. F., poor silly creature; and so cut out my sister.

Mrs. D. Mrs. Figgins is a vulgar, disagreeable woman—always thinking her own children prettier and better than any body's else's; and I am sure they are no such wonders either:—but Mrs. Mercer says just the same about Mr. Plausible. He is winning all hearts, with his winning ways.

D. He has not won mine, I can tell him that; and he won't neither. I can't bear flattery and palaver—it makes me ill; and so I shall tell him, if he attempt to flatter me.

Mrs. D. They say he is an Honourable, too; he son of an Earl.

D. Better be the son of a rich manufacturer than a poor Lord. And now I remember, he was the very dandy who rode over the people at Hardstone, shouting—"To the kennel with the *canaille*!" He knew Hardstone sent no member to parliament. No proud aristocrat for me. No, no: I stick to Newton—he is one of us, and has the same interests. He is a manufacturer, as was his father before him, rolling in riches.

[*Enter the HON. MR. PLAUSIBLE, attended by one or two Electioneering Friends. MR. PLAUSIBLE, advancing with the most flattering graciousness, addresses MR. DRAPER; who at first looks sullen, but gradually softens.*]

P. I was just going to do myself the honour of calling on you, Mr. Draper; and count this meeting not only a fortunate circumstance, but also a happy omen. You have read my address, I hope, to the loyal and enlightened inhabitants of Goldborough, and will, I trust, honour me with your support and interest.

D. [*interrupting him.*] Hope no such thing sir; quite out of the question. I support Mr. Newton—a man who has raised himself to wealth and consideration by his own talents, and understands the best interests of his country.

P. He can scarcely understand them better than yourself, Mr. Draper, if I may judge from the opinions expressed of you by your

fellow-citizens ; and I cannot but think that my principles, when fully explained, will meet with your approbation.

Mr. D. [shortly, but a little less sullenly.] Pray do not give yourself the trouble of an explanation, Mr. Plausible. I must support Mr. Newton : he is one of us—no aristocrat.

P. That must be as you please, and may hereafter decide ; but, at least, permit me the benefit of your counsel, should my opinions on commerce appear to you erroneous. You positively must not refuse me this. *[Smiling most graciously.]* But you must first honour me with an introduction to your fair companion, Mrs. Draper, I conclude, from what I have heard of your conjugal happiness. Ah ! Mr. Draper, you are a fortunate man ! many may envy you. *[Making a profound bow to the lady, who is hastily introduced by her husband.]* I should congratulate you, too, madam, on being the wife of one who is so much looked up to by all his fellow-townsmen ; and in whose liberal and enlightened opinions all men of sense must coincide. Yes, like you, Mr. Draper, I am for free trade—at least, in corn. What has raised England to her present transcendent glory but her manufactures, her trade, her commerce ? Who are her stays and support but her merchants ? Where is the greatest mass of intelligence to be found, but among her tradespeople ? What energy !

what striving! what—I cannot conclude, for looking at that lovely child. I have an absolute passion for some children. For the generality I care but little—they are mere masses of soft, red flesh, with large round heads: nothing defined—nothing to strike you; but there is a something absolutely startling about this child. [*Passing his hand caressingly over its head, and then kissing it.*] Such mingled sweetness and intelligence! That child will turn out a genius—one to be talked of in after-ages—mark my words! I beg your pardon, Mr. Draper, for breaking off so abruptly; but that child was irresistible. How I envy its parents! Can you tell me their name? [*Mr. and Mrs. Draper, highly gratified, speaking together*].—It is ours.

P. Yours? then I do envy you indeed. I must get married, as soon as I have gained my election, and settle in the neighbourhood; you must furnish the bridal dress, Draper; for I must crave your fair lady to select it. I was struck with the elegant assortment which your windows displayed in High Street; yes, yes; we will have cheap-bread, and all hands at work—import corn if needed, and pay for it in manufactures; no sending money out of the country, but goods—manufactured goods; all the mills going merrily, and all trades flourishing. Don't you agree with me, Mr. Draper?

Mr. D. [*Eagerly.*] Exactly, sir! exactly! you

understand the state of the country to a *T*, and take a most comprehensive view of our political position. Foreigners must take our manufactures ; and the corn monopoly must be done away with. Every true patriot must be for cheap bread, and full employment.

P. Exactly so, Mr. Draper ; positively you must be on my committee. It is so rare to meet with a man with such extended views, and unselfish mind ; one so free from class interests.

Mr. D. [*Flattered, but still hesitating.*] I admire your principles—but—I voted for Mr. Newton before—I had intended to vote for him now—he is more one of us.—

P. No, no, Mr. Draper ; I count you as one of us—one of the nobility of nature's making, if not of the Queen's. Who stood out for their rights, at Runny-mede—ay, and won them too—but the barons ? my forefather among the number. And who stands up for their rights now but enlightened citizens, Mr. Draper at their head ? Ay, and they shall win them too. Mr. Newton, in his address, speaks of all interests to win the agriculturist ; I say the manufacturing is the interest, which must be supported at the present moment. You must be one of my committee, Draper ; [*laying his hand familiarly on his arm*] and that dear child ; you must let me bring my mother to see

it, when she comes down. The Countess will dote on it, as I do.

[*Mr. and Mrs. D. flattered and fluttered, speaking together,*] We shall feel much honoured by receiving the Countess.

P. The pleasure and honor will be hers ; titles are but vain distinctions—the mind—the mind is every thing. I little anticipated what beauty, grace, and statesman-like views I should find at Goldborough. I shall be proud, indeed, of representing such an enlightened community ; and now count my election certain, having Mr. Draper on my committee. Farewell for the present [*to Mrs. D.*] I shall see you within an hour at the George [*to her husband, shaking hands with the parents, and kissing the child*].

Mrs. D. [*as she is going.*] That is a gentleman ! I am sure he never rode over the people at Hardstone.

Mr. D. [*warmly.*] The herald ought to be prosecuted for publishing such a lie. There is a true patriot, and no mistake.

[*Exeunt the Drapers.*]

P. [*to his friend.*] I think I did that well. No class interests — one of nature's nobility. How greedily he swallowed the bait ; and how his eyes glistened at my raptures about his dowdy wife, and doltish looking child. Faugh ! how the little animal smelt of mutton, from its mid-day meal. There is no bait like flattery ;

it costs nothing but the pains of suiting it to the palate of the poor gudgeon you would catch, and I am skilful in that. But who comes here? One of another seeming without, but the same within, I doubt not: all hold their first duty to be the care of number one—and so do I.

Friend. This is farmer Sturdy, who has property of his own, and rents large farms. He can command several votes, and influence more. You will not win him over so easily.

P. We shall see. A good substantial yeoman, with blue coat, and top boots; and a nose that turns up at the thought of anything new. I must go on another tack here. Oh! Mr. Sturdy, I was just going to do myself the honour of calling on you [*advancing most graciously towards the farmer, and holding out his hand*].

Sturdy. [*frowns, stands very erect, and keeps his hand in his pocket, speaking very gruffly.*] I don't stand palaver, Mr. Plausible, and I don't shake hands with one who would overturn church and state.

P. Nor would I, Mr. Sturdy; I admire your principles, and your honest firmness in carrying them out.

Sturdy. [*astonished.*] Why I understood you were a radical!

P. Why, if you hold, as most people do, that all who go a little further than yourself are radicals—perhaps I may be. For instance, I

may bring in a bill for lessening the pressure of tithes on the farmer, and reducing some of the taxes which press most heavily on agriculture.

S. [astonished and eagerly.] Would you, though? Well, I thought you were another guess sort of man—full of your free trade, railroad, new-fangled sort of notions. Now I say new things are not like old ones; and those who live on the soil should live by the soil.

P. Capital! Mr. Sturdy. That last sentence is worth a hundred long speeches made in the house by blustering demagogues—who praise the new, and despise the old. A sentence so strong—so terse. We will have free trade to mean—that the farmer shall sell his corn as dear as he can; and as for rail-roads—those who will have them—making oats at a discount—must pay for the land. Eh! Mr. Sturdy—you understand me?

S. [chuckling] To be sure, sir. Ay, I see you are one for the good old times—one of the right sort: take care of the agricultural interest—and let the manufacturing—

P. [significantly] Take care of itself. I must have a look over your farm, Sturdy—I hear it is the best managed in the county.

S. [flattered out of his sulkiness.] I shall be proud to shew it you, Mr. Plausible. My farm is carried on on the good old principles.

P. Give us your hand, Mr. Sturdy, it is a rare, and a real pleasure to meet in these days of steamers and spinning jennies, with such a fine specimen of the good old fashioned English farmer, frank, intelligent, and hospitable. [*Sturdy gives his hand most readily, and returns Plausible's shake with interest.*] With your vote and interest, Sturdy, I count my election certain. All in the hundreds round you, will vote as you do.

S. [*hesitating and looking perplexed.*] My vote—why, you see, Mr. Plausible, I admire your opinions—but then I have always voted for Lord Old Castle; one of a good, rich, old family—always votes for the corn laws; and calls himself the farmer's friend.

P. He may vote for the corn laws; but he never speaks for them;—and you want a man who can speak your sentiments in the house: any booby can say aye, or no. Now I understand all your views exactly, but I must have a longer talk with you before I quit Goldborough: you must not only make me your member, but your mouth-piece.

S. [*more faintly.*] But I have always voted for Lord Old Castle:—my father did before me.

P. “Yes; and, in consequence, his lordship counts on your vote as his right; but you are too high-spirited—too independent to be

counted a mere cipher. No, no, Sturdy, you must vote for me. Ay, and win others to do the same. My father's last words were—"Gain Mr. Sturdy's support, and you are safe. Get him to explain his views on agriculture, and above all, go over his farm; for it is the best managed in the country; and ask him to recommend me a bailiff. There are few such men as Mr. Sturdy to be met with now." Can you recommend the Earl a bailiff?

S. [*much flattered, and quite overcome.*] Did the Earl really say this? Yes, yes; he shall have a bailiff; and his son shall have my vote.

P. Thank you, Mr. Sturdy: you must let me bring the Earl to see you and your farm [*shaking hands again, and speaking confidentially.*] You must not be surprised if I say little to the manufacturers, about the excellent corn-laws;—it would not go down with them; but you understand my views. Let me sit for Goldborough—and then see. We must play civil to the cotton-spinners, to cut out Newton.

S. [*winking*] I understand: but you are for the good old cause at heart.

P. Trust me for that [*laying his hand on his heart*].

S. Then I will bring up a good round number of votes; and I'll be sure not to forget

the bailiff ; and shall be happy to show the Earl my farm.

[*Exit Sturdy, after another cordial shake of the hand.*]

P. [*looking after him.*] There ! I told you I should do him. But who comes here—a clod-hopper ? Has he a vote ?

F. Yes, Stubborn has a vote.

P. Then I must be civil, though he smells of the earth—earthy. [*He advances most graciously to meet the Countryman, who looks stupid.*] Well met !—good day !

Countryman. [*with an awkward bow, and staring.*] Good day again, Sir !

P. Fine harvest weather, Mr. Stubborn,—bread will be cheap.

C. Will it, Sir ?

P. It ought to be !

C. Ought it, Sir ?

P. [*warmly*] To be sure ; and so it shall be—if I come in for Goldborough. I will read them such a lesson in Parliament, that the poor shall be righted ; and their claims allowed. Are not the honest industrious yeomen of England the sinews of her strength ;—the pillars of her power ? You have a vote, I think, Mr. Stubborn ; and I have the honour to solicit that vote, and your interest.

C. [*quite unmoved, and speaking in a dogged tone.*] I always votes for blue.

P. [*Aside — dolt.*] It is my wish — my hope — Mr. Stubborn, to keep every cottage furnished with a barrel of beer—a side of bacon—and a tub of flour. Those who make England prosperous by their labour should share that prosperity; and when in the house, every effort shall be strained to accomplish it.

C. Ay, all says that—I always votes blue. Be you blue?

P. Nay, you will vote for me; I am sure you will. You must be for cheap bread, meat, and beer.

C. [*Going*] I don't know that: I always votes blue—the steward says I must vote blue, or I shall be turned out.

P. Stay one moment; you are of too independent a spirit, I am sure, to be moved by such a threat; only just—

C. No—I can't stay; Measter wants me at home; so it ain't no use staying. I always votes blue, as faither did afore me.

P. Surely, you will not vote for Lord Oldcastle, who gives less wages than any one in the county?

C. I don't know; but I always votes blue—they always votes blue round us.

[*Exit Countryman.*]

Cynic. [*Who has entered unperceived.*] Ha! ha! ha! your eloquence wasted—you can overcome a principle; but not a colour.

P. The fellow is an idiot; "And true, no meaning puzzles more than wit." But what is your news, Cynic? How many votes have you secured?

C. Tens! hundreds! thousands! if you will pay them enough.

P. How corrupt the people are become? I discourage bribery on principle.

C. Or necessity. You would bribe with the tongue—not with the pocket.

P. Ay! what was speech given for, but to win fortune with? A little breath, judiciously laid out may, bring in greater interest than much gold unwisely squandered. And here comes Timid, the baker, to put my powers to the proof. Good morning, Mr. Timid; I do myself the pleasure of soliciting your vote and interest. Amid the thoughtless extravagance of the higher classes, and the ignorance of the lower, it is to the middling and most intelligent portion that we must look for the preservation of the country. I shall consider the obtaining your vote an honor.

Timid. [*In a low and hesitating tone*] Sir—I—have—no—vote.

P. [*Aside, in anger.*] Why did not the fool tell me so before?—No vote, Mr. Timid? Allow me to say that I consider it the duty of every patriot to register, and obtain a vote.

T. And to be ruined, as I was before, for acting according to my conscience.

[Exit Timid.

C. And very justly too. An Englishman has a right to a vote—but not to a conscience. It is a rich man's privilege to ruin a poor one, if he will not vote as he wishes.

P. It is nonsense men talking of conscience—unless to carry a point. But here comes Voluble, the radical upholsterer, who can influence forty votes, they say. I must win him over—let it cost what it may: he is open-mouthed.

Enter VOLUBLE, who advances with a self-sufficient air, and speaks at once.

V. I believe I have the honour of addressing the Honourable Mr. Plausible. You have called at my house, sir, I understand, to solicit my vote and interest; but before I can support you, there are several points on which I must be satisfied; and on which I am deputed, as the head—the mouth-piece, I may say—of an influential party, in this independent borough, to put some questions. There are the tithes—the church rates—the corn laws—shorter parliaments—extended suffrage—and vote by ballot. On your answers touching these must entirely depend your being supported by myself, and friends, and consequent return for this borough. The interests of the mass must no longer be

sacrificed to the interests of individuals. Numbers must be thought of—the aggregate of mind to be found in numbers. We must have legislation for the many.

P. [*taking advantage of VOLUBLE's pausing to gain breath.*] Yes, Mr. Voluble, we must, as you so wisely observe, have legislation for the many. I perfectly agree with you in all things. The influential party, which you represent, could not have selected a more ready and eloquent mouth-piece.

V. [*Much flattered.*] I am gratified by your accordance with my sentiments, and delighted to find you such an enlightened and upright patriot. Then you pledge yourself, if we bring you in for this independent town of Goldborough, to do away with church rates, and corn laws—reduce the taxes—shorten parliaments—extend the suffrage—have vote by ballot—and introduce a sweeping reform in all things?

P. Certainly, Mr. Voluble; every thing that can conduce to my country's welfare.

V. You are a true patriot, Sir, I see. And you pledge yourself to resign your seat—should your constituents be dissatisfied?

P. Of course; I count myself but the agent of the enlightened and independent voters of Goldborough.

V. And you also pledge yourself to—

P. [*interrupting him, but very courteously.*] Every thing which you and your enlightened party can require.

V. [*Shaking his hand with warmth.*] Then Sir, you are the candidate for us ; and you may count yourself certain of coming in for Goldborough. I will go and report your answers immediately. Hip! hip! hip! hurrah! Plausible for ever !

[*Exit Mr. VOLUBLE in haste, the cry of —PLAUSIBLE for ever! is taken up from without, and repeated with many cheers.*]

P. That is soon done—forty votes won by a little breath.

C. And many promises.

P. Ha! ha! ha! yes, I am a good promiser—there is no denying that; and the popular candidate too.—Hark !

C. The popular candidate you may be.

P. Ay ; and the popular member too. Why not ?

C. Only because the suspension of the writ, and an enquiry into the practices of the pure—independent—and enlightened voters of Goldborough has been carried by a majority of fifty.

P. [*astounded.*] Is this true ?

C. More true than your promises !

P. A plague on the majority They who

live in glass houses should not throw stones.
All my flattery and cajolery wasted. The
money!—I must stop the money,

[*hurrying out.*]

C. [*Looking after him.*] Lavish paid some
hundreds, an hour ago. Get it back if you
can. So much for a popular candidate—and
purity of election; the rich bribers punishing
the poor bribed.

[*Exit CYNIC.*]



MISTAKE.

PART I.
MIS-
CHARACTERS.

MR. PETTY.
MR. HERBERT.
MR. BEAUCLERC.
MISS BEAUCLERC.

PART II.
TAKE.

FRANK RATTLE.
SUSAN WEYLAND.

PART III.
MISTAKE.

MR. TILT.
MRS. TILT.
MISS TILT.
RATTLEBRAIN.
SHARPWIT.

PART I.

*Enter MR. PETTY, who lounges up and down in
a most coxcombical manner.*

Mr. Petty. What a bore of a place! Nothing doing — nothing saying. Not even a hurdy-gurdy, nor a dancing-dog to be seen; and as to making one's fortune by marrying an heiress, one might as well be on the top of Mont Blanc for that. Why, the very houses look as if designed by stupidity, built by dulness, and inhabited by *ennui*. 'Care killed a cat,' they say; I wonder what will kill time. I wish one could kill a day, as one does a partridge—at a shot. I should not mind paying double for my certificate, if that could be done [*yawns, and looks at his watch*]. Only three o'clock now. One cannot well go to bed before ten, nor leave it later than eleven. Heigh ho! what shall I do for the next seven hours? If I could but get any one to give me a dinner, that would be

a change, and a saving of money, too; but nobody here gives dinners. What a bore of a place! yet here I must stay, in the hope of seeing, and wooing, and winning Miss Beauclerc, the great heiress of the West. For that I came, for that I must remain; and if I can but see her, why the winning follows, as a matter of course. [*He arranges his stock, and taps his boot with his whip, in perfect self-satisfaction.*] She was expected a week ago: one would think she knew of my being here, and feared the meeting. They say she is beautiful—what woman with five thousand a-year is not? Or who would care if she were as hideous as a sphinx, with such a dower? I have a letter of introduction to her father: my own wit and figure must do the rest. There is no fear of the result:—but how to amuse myself in the mean time? Ha! here comes a woman: coarse straw bonnet, plain ribbon, plain gown. Some poor wretch of a governess, who teaches every thing, and bears every thing, for twenty pounds a-year. A governess is always fair game; so I can stare her out of countenance, for want of something better to do. One would walk with the Fates, and make *les doux yeux* at the Furies, at such a place as this, rather than do nothing.

Enter a Lady, closely veiled.

MR. PETTY stands in her way, and stares at her most impertinently through his glass. The

lady steps aside, and, walking on to a seat, opens a book, and seems absorbed in its perusal.

P. Humph! not bad action; but she can't be pretty, or she would not keep her veil down; and she must be wanting in taste, or she would have seemed more flattered by my notice, and not walked off in such haste. Turned her back to me, too, and pulled out a book! Is that shyness or coquetry? or is the creature a Blue? Shall I follow, and look over her shoulder? No: here comes some one else to amuse me.

Enter MR. HERBERT.

P. [*advancing with warmth.*] Ha! Herbert, my good fellow—you here! This is an unexpected pleasure. You cannot imagine, till you have been in this dullest of all places a week, the delight of seeing a new face.

H. [*laughing.*] So I owe the warmth of my welcome to the dulness of the place, and the novelty of my appearance. Why stay in so dull a place?

P. I have a purpose, Herbert. There is an heiress in the wind; and I am so out at elbows that I must sell myself to buy cloth to mend them.

H. And who may this heiress be, who is to patch your worn-out elbows?

P. Excuse me; that is a secret at present.

H. I would not be impertinently curious; but how soon will it all be settled?

P. In three days after her arrival. One to see her, one to woo her, and one to win her; or she may dispense with the third, and consent on the second. I always make a hit.

H. Or miss.

P. There will be no miss here. The heiress shall be my *fiancée* within a week. There are few girls would say me nay. I wish I was as certain of dining out to-day; I am tired of dining at the hotel. I say, Herbert, who is that girl there reading? She is some dowdy governess I know, conning the next day's lesson for the children;—but whose governess is she?

H. Call any woman dowdy with such an air as that?

P. Pooh! airs, you mean, put on to fan me into a flame: but it won't do: I am used to such things. I really must marry, and not give pain to so many. But what is that girl's name?

H. I cannot catch her face.

P. Oh! depend upon it she is a fright; for she turned away her head, lest I should see her face.

H. The turn of the head and shoulders is very graceful.

P. Tolerable; but she is curving her neck for me. Poor thing! it will be of no use: I cannot think of any one under an heiress. Who

is this coming now? Some old fogram of a fellow: old men should keep out of sight, and not thus remind the young of what they may come to hereafter.

Enter an Elderly Gentleman.

Stranger. [*addressing Petty, whilst Herbert is occupied in scrutinizing the lady.*] Will you be kind enough to tell me which is the shortest way to Clarence Villa?

P. [*impertinently.*] That which is not the longest, I conclude. [*Loud, aside.* Impertinent old fogram! Does he take me for a guide-book, or *laquais de place*? Old men are always troublesome.]

H. [*turns round at the voice, and meets the Stranger with much warmth.*] This is a real pleasure, Mr. Beauclerc, I only arrived ten minutes since; and was on my way to your house. I hope your daughter is well.

B. Quite well; and will be as much pleased as myself at this meeting; and there she is, to answer for herself. Louisa!

[*The lady joins her father, and shakes hands with Herbert.*]

P. [*Aside.* So, that is old Beauclerc and his daughter, the heiress. Monstrous fine girl, now her veil is up. Idiot that I was not to guess the truth! I am like to find myself in a scrape here; *n'importe*, my figure, wit, and impudence have got me out of worse scrapes before now.

Herbert must have known it, and let me go on to suit his own views. And how he is looking at the heiress, and she smiling approval at all he says. I shall be obliged to shoot him for his impertinence. Not till he has introduced me, though. *Aloud, laying his hand on Herbert's shoulder to attract his attention.*] Will you do me the honour of introducing me to Mr. and Miss Beauclerc?

H. [coldly.] I must consult their wishes first. Why desire an introduction to a dowdy governess, and an old fogram?

P. [in a whisper.] Pooh, pooh, Herbert! you know I was in jest, or spoke in ignorance. Introduce me.

H. Excuse me. [He turns to Miss Beauclerc.]

P. [Aside. An impudent puppy! Then I must introduce myself.] Ahem! I believe I have the honour of addressing Mr. Beauclerc.

B. [who returns his salutation coldly.] What then, sir?

P. [Aside. I must put a bold face upon it; but the old fellow's manner is so odd that it makes me nervous—flusters me. He shall not live with us—that is poz.] [aloud.] Why, then, sir, I flatter myself I may claim a sort of acquaintance; an acquaintance by inheritance, as it were!—ahem! My grandfather was a particular friend of your father's, sir, as I have often heard; they were near neighbours—buried next each other.

B. My grandmother was buried next a wash-erwoman; but I never heard of her descendants claiming acquaintance by inheritance.

P. [*Aside.* Crusty old fellow, this; I must smooth him over.] [*aloud.* Very good joke that, Mr. Beauclerc; very good indeed, but the Beauclercs were always famous for their wit, and the Pettys were not an inch behind them for that. My grandfather had a great respect and regard for the late Mr. Beauclerc.

B. No doubt my ancestor felt highly honoured.

P. [*Aside.* I wonder if he is in jest, or in earnest. I will suppose in earnest.] [*aloud.* Yes, sir, they were great friends, and I was reared in sentiments of the highest respect and esteem for yourself and Miss Beauclerc. Indeed, my purpose in coming hither was to have the supreme felicity of forming a friendship with yourself and lovely daughter.

B. [*eyeing Petty from head to foot, then turning to Herbert.*] Who is the fellow?

P. [*colouring.*] Here is a letter of introduction, sir, from Lord Witling, which, but for this fortunate meeting, I should have delivered in the regular way. [*aside.* Oh, I see his lordship's name has moved him. Now to enchant the daughter, whilst he reads the letter.] Miss Beauclerc, I fear my admiration but now was too openly expressed; but there are impression^s

so strong that a Talleyrand himself could not conceal them. Allow me to throw myself at your feet, and proclaim myself your willing and most devoted slave.

Miss B. Pray do not interrupt [my studies, Mr. Petty; I have not sufficiently conned over the lessons for my pupils to-morrow.

P. [*colouring, aside.* Confusion! She heard what I said, and will never forgive me. I must try and put on a bold face, however.] [*aloud.* Oh, that you would admit me as one of those pupils.

Miss B. You would not learn of a dowdy governess.

P. Ha! ha! ha! [*laughs affectedly.*] So you took the jest as I intended.

H. [*Aside to Petty.* She will not take the jester as you intended.]

B. [*having read the letter.*] Come, Herbert, I shall keep you prisoner for the rest of the day, consigning you to the charge of Louisa.

H. That is a bondage from which I shall never wish to escape.

B. [*laughing.*] She may believe that if she will; only don't forget that I dine at six, and like punctuality. Good morning, Mr. Petty.

P. [*stammering.*] You have read his lordship's letter, I believe.

B. I have, and shall act accordingly.

P. [*Aside.* The old fogram does not intend to

be civil. I shall not even get a dinner out of him, [and Herbert will carry off the heiress. I will make one more attempt.] [*aloud*. I shall be most happy to show you the way to Clarence Villa.

B. On no account. I would not think of turning you into a guide-book, or *laquais de place*.

P. Oh, I should not heed that in the least, and shall do myself the honour of walking home with you. [*aside*.] He must ask me to dine when I get to the house.

B. Excuse me, I am otherwise engaged; and old men should not walk with young, it puts them in mind of what they may come to hereafter. Come, Louisa.

[*Exeunt MR. and MISS BEAUCLERC.*]

H. [*As he is going out.*] No dinner — no heiress, eh, Petty? I said it would be a miss.

[*Exit HERBERT.*]

P. Impertinent coxcomb! I have a great mind to shoot that fellow, and make it a hit. Who will pay my debts, I wonder. Such a lovely creature! And five thousand a year! — a Miss indeed!

[*Exit.*]

PART II.

A drawing room—Susan Weyland completing a purse; her cousin Frank Rattle looking on.

F. Oh! that I were a purse wrought by that lily hand.

S. How many removes are you from it already, cousin Frank? who steals my purse steals trash.

F. Not so; your touch has made it of a priceless worth.

S. [*laughing.*] Shall I give you a box on the ear, thus stamping you with a worth beyond your own?

F. Give me the hand that bestows it; and I hold a treasure beyond the *koh-i-nur* of the East.

S. Very prettily said, cousin Frank, I declare. Of whom have you been taking lessons in the art of compliments?

F. I have no teacher but my own heart.

S. You are an apt scholar, there can be no doubt ; whether your choice of a science is as wise as your proficiency therein is great, I leave sager heads to determine. Grandmamma tells me that the heart is not a safe teacher. ,

F. Pooh ! grandmamas always talk nonsense.

S. Oh ! fie, cousin Frank. I will tell her what you say, and then she will not leave you her gold-headed cane, mackaw, and parrot, as she intends.

F. Well, it is fusty musty sense, at the best ; grown too old by keeping to be fit for use.

S. How disrespectful ! what would your good aunt say to such a speech ? she would think you had turned chartist.

F. I will be chartist, or any thing else to please you.

S. Oh, fie ! fie ! fie ! there are all your respectable tory and conservative ancestors turning in their graves at the bare thought of such degeneracy ; and even your great uncle, the radical, grins grimly in the jaws of death.

F. I heed no others, Susan, so that I please you.

S. Then you will not please me by becoming chartist. Chartists do not go far enough. They talk of universal suffrage ; but would confine it to the males. Now if all men who have heads, no matter how empty, are to vote, I

think all women who have tongues, however sharp, should have the same; nay, I see no reason why donkies, dogs, and cats should not have parliaments of their own. I am sure we have all grievances to redress.

F. Do you desire a seat in parliament, fair coz?

S. Only that I may cough down, or cut up, your maiden speech. I would always wait to answer you.

F. I would keep silence so long that you should be able to keep it no longer; and then it would be for me to answer you.

S. Out upon you for a slanderer! who used to win the reward for keeping silence the longest in our childish days?—not you.

F. No; you always tempted or provoked me to speak, as you do now; and then mocked at my folly. You are the same as ever.

S. [*Curtseying with much gravity.*] I thank you for the compliment, for compliment it must be, since consistency is so rare a virtue, and grieve that I cannot return it, for you are widely changed; and some might think not much for the better. The wild glee of my cousin Rattle is verging into mawkish sentiment.

F. When we parted I was a boy: I am now a man—

S. [*laughing.*] Or a monkey. The monkey

who has seen the world, and so, having grown sentimental himself, would fain have me do the same. I pray you be a boy again for the next half hour. There is nobody to see, and I will not tell. Women can keep secrets. It was not a woman who revealed the gunpowder plot; nor one half of the other plots—

F. Perhaps, because they were not trusted.

S. Impertinent! there was one at least trusted, who told nothing, though put on the rack.

F. Oh! *a rara avis*! The black swan of her sex! An unparalleled fact, if true; but I never saw the lady, any more than I have seen the unicorn.

S. Or any of the wise men of Greece. Does your heart teach you to libel, as it taught you but now to compliment?

F. No; self-interest is my teacher now, which bids me take all I can get, not give all I have.

S. Take all you can get, humph! an honest rule truly—I must look after my goods and chattels [*she sweeps them together*].

F. Stop; I only use force when guile cannot succeed, force being the weapon of an uncivilized age. Give me that purse, sweet coz, as hire for my defence of your sex.

S. My sex, like truth, needs no defence.

F. Or, like falsehood, cannot be defended.

S. Say you that from your heart?

F. Heart ! there is no such thing now a days.

S. I thank you for the admission.

F. You sought the truth. Hearts went out with hoops and farthingales.

S. No ; only when segars came in. You are wrong in your chronology.

F. Teach me, sweet Susan, how to be right. Let me be your pupil.

S. I am afraid you would do me no credit.

F. Try.—I will be so patient, and so docile.

S. I doubt it ; you will deserve the fool's cap within an hour. What shall I teach you first ?

F. How I may win your heart.

S. Heart ! there is no such thing now-a-days.

F. [*in vexation.*] So I believe.

S. [*archly.*] Do you ?

F. [*sharply.*] I am convinced a woman has none.

S. What a wonderful surgical discovery ! the steam engine is nothing to it. I should not wonder if you discovered perpetual motion : you cannot sit still, I see.

F. Then you will not let me be your pupil !

S. Oh ! yes, I will teach you to sing thus :

“ Men were made, I'm sure, to please us,
Such their looks, their words imply ;
We were fools to let them tease us,
If you would—so would not I.”

F. I shall substitute women.

S. It will spoil the matter.

F. I think only of the sense.

S. Wrong—who thinks of sense in poetry?

F. Or in women, some would add.—

S. No doubt they would. Some think all foolish which they cannot comprehend: your wisest men cannot understand women, whom they would dissect—analyse by rules of the head, not by rules of the heart. Now, cousin Frank, you are a wise man in your own conceit, but you never can be in mine. I can please you, and tease you; jest with you, and argue with you, nay even love you—as a cousin, mind you, only—but never respect you. How can one respect a person with whom one has played blind man's buff, and puss in the corner, and whom, it may be, one has seen with a fool's cap on his head? Why if you turned out a Milton, a Newton, or a Wellington, in the eyes of others, I could still only think of you as the little apple-cheeked snub-nosed boy, who was always in disgrace for tearing his jacket, and filling his pockets with pears and nuts, honey and treacle, sugar and spice, and all that is nice, and nasty too.

F. I will win your respect.

S. And find out the Philosopher's stone?

F. Give me that purse, and I will wear it as Knights wore favors of old, as an incentive to noble deeds.

S. Claim it hereafter with my respect.

F. Sweet Susan, give it me now.

S. No, no.

F. You will not give it ?

S. No.

F. Then I must take it. [He snatches the purse and runs out with it.]

S. And take yourself off too. I must try and get back the purse. A pretty pass our cousin-age is come to : If I will not give, why he will take : I must go and read him a lecture on honesty. [Exit.

PART III.



A scantily furnished room, MR. TILT adding up his weekly bills with a moody air; MRS. and MISS TILT at work, looking little more cheerful.

Mrs. T. I am sorry to tell you, the butcher has sent to say that his bill must be paid, or he will supply us no longer.

T. Must is for the Queen. How are bills to be paid without money?

Mrs. T. I don't know, my dear.

T. And I am sure I don't. All my speculations have turned out losses; every thing I undertake is sure to turn out badly. I am the most unfortunate creature living. Some men spend three fortunes and make four, whilst I can neither make, nor spend, even one. If sovereigns grew on brambles like blackberries, I should only prick my fingers, in vain attempts to gather

them, or else all I picked would be sure to be under weight. I always have more bad coin than any one else.

Mrs. T. Yes, we are very unlucky, my dear; there is your cousin now; he has had a legacy left him;

T. Ah! there it is again; every one else has a legacy, but no one leaves anything to me. I have not a rich uncle to go to, as some have, or, if I had, he would be sure to make some one else his heir, and refuse to lend or give me a penny.

Mrs. T. There is your cousin Timothy Flint, after whom you were named; he is very rich, they say; perhaps he would lend you something just to go on with till you can make a few hundreds.

T. He lend me anything! He is the veriest skin-flint living. Starves himself, starves his servants; even the rats and mice cannot pick up a living in his house; besides, I gave him mortal offence by eating a hearty dinner, the only time I ever dined there. He is not flesh and blood; he is stone, iron, ice; no, not ice, for there is no melting him. I am sure I don't know what is to become of me, with my large family. That is another unlucky thing — a large family — few people have as large a family as I have; but it is all of a piece. Some people are born with golden spoons in

their mouths—I was born without any; not even a horn one. If Timothy Flint were to die, he would be sure to leave all he has to another, and, moreover, he seems determined to live for ever. He must be a very old man—a very old man indeed.

Enter RATTLEBRAIN.

R. Ah! Tilt, I congratulate you Mrs. Tilt, I wish you joy: Miss Sophia, I salute you! never mind bills now—let them go to the dogs [*he scatters the bills about*]. Every one will trust you now—every one does trust a man when he does not need it.

T. [*in amazement.*] What is the meaning of all this?

R. What, you really don't know? you have not heard? Well I am delighted at being the first to tell you [*rubbing his hands*]. To be sure I ran all the way, that I might be the first to congratulate you—outran the omnibus—knocked down one cripple, two old women, and a child, and nearly got knocked down myself from a cry of 'Stop thief.' But I don't mind all this now, as I shall be the first to tell you.

T. [*eagerly.*] Tell me what?

R. I will tell you in a moment, man; only just let me get my breath; you are so impatient. We will shake hands all round in the mean time. Away with your needle, my dear

madam ; no more making old clothes look like new ; you need never set a stitch again. Oh ! Miss Sophy, you look so lovely ; I declare if I were a year or two younger ;—but you will have loads of suitors now—only to pick and choose.

T. [in a fidget, aside.] Dolt ! Why does not he speak out ? *[aloud.]* How, Rattlebrain ? why ? what do you mean ? don't keep me in suspense.

R. Bless the man, how impatient he is ; won't let me recover breath ; well there then, sit down and let me begin at the beginning ; have not you a cousin called Timothy Flint ?

T. [eagerly.] Yes ; what of that ?

R. Oh ! a great deal of that. He is dead.

Mrs. T. Dead ! *[aside.]* So the old fellow is gone at last.

R. Yes, dead ; and you did not know it ? Well I am glad I am the first to tell you *[rubbing his hands again]*, yes : dead, and made a will too, and left all his fortune—let me think was it one or two hundred thousand pounds *[aside : I will say two, it will please him more ;]* two hundred thousand pounds to — can you guess ? yes, I see you can—to you, Timothy Tilt. Ah ! you are overpowered at the news, as you well may be. Let us shake hands once more. Two hundred thousand pounds all of a minute ; it is astounding !

T. It is indeed. But are you quite sure?

R. To be sure I am; do you think I would tell you if I were not? I was at my lawyer's, transacting a little business, and heard it there; they were reading the will in the next room, with the door open; so I could hear it all. Some of the money is in the funds; but where the rest is, I know not, having run off directly to tell you the news. Yes; two hundred thousand pounds—and no mistake. A fine old fellow, is not he?

T. Yes, very fine old fellow. A worthy man! make and save for his relatives. My father had a great respect for his character—[*aside*: or his money]—and named me after him. It has come just in time too; just when I did not know where to lay my hands on a shilling.

R. Ay, ay; lucky fellow—born with a golden spoon in your mouth. What shall you do with it all?

T. Pay that impertinent butcher first; and then have nothing more to do with him. Things are come to a pretty pass in these charist times: every tradesman thinks he may dun a debtor, be he who he may. There is no advantage in being a gentlemen now-a-days; then Timothy shall go to Eton; and perhaps into the Guards, at a proper age.

Mrs. T. And we must have a suitable house; I should like one of the new ones near Hyde

Park. And Sophy should be presented, my dear; she may look for a high match now. Miss Higgins married an Earl, and Sophy has better birth, and better looks and manners.

T. I shall take a house near the moors for grouse-shooting; a man is counted nobody without that. We shall find plenty of ways to spend the money.

R. So it appears. But who comes here? Oh! my worthy solicitor, Sharpwit, come to tell you of the legacy. I am glad I was before him.

Enter SHARFWIT.

R. Ah! Sharpwit, for once I have the advantage of you.

S. Indeed! then it will be my turn next time. But what is the advantage?

R. You will soon find out. I can guess what you came for; but go on [*aside*]. How disappointed he will be when he finds that I have forestalled his news! I am glad I was the first.

S. My visit is to you, Mr. Tilt, and I come on a melancholy errand. Your cousin, Mr. Timothy Flint, I grieve to say—

T. [*In a melancholy tone, holding his handkerchief to his eyes.*] Is dead.—I know it, Mr. Sharpwit. A sad loss indeed to sorrowing relatives. A most worthy man was Mr. Timothy Flint.—Generous, humane, and sincere :

my father had a great respect and affection for my worthy cousin, and, in consequence, named me after him. I do not know whether any thing is said in the will about it; but my cousin should have a handsome monument erected to his memory.

S. [*Aside.* Is this real?] [*aloud.*] Of course, Mr. Tilt, that rests with you: I am sure the executors will make no objection. I conclude you know that the deceased has left you—

T. A handsome legacy. Yes, I know that; and it is a sense of his goodness which has so overpowered us. However great our gain, we must all feel his loss. So kind, so open-handed! A truly worthy man.

Mrs. T. [*Holding a handkerchief to her eyes.*] We were all much grieved at hearing of his death; and shall make a point of mourning for him as for a father. We could do no less, after his leaving us such a legacy.

S. [*Aside,* [What can all this mean?] [*aloud.*] I fear there must be some little misapprehension here: I have not named the amount of the legacy.

T. We have already heard that, but would gladly hear it again, officially, from you.

S. Since you wish it, sir, the deceased, Timothy Flint, gives and bequeaths to his dearly-beloved cousin, Timothy Tilt, of Trimstreet, the sum of Five pounds sterling, to buy

a ledger, wherein to set down his debts, incurred through extravagance, and his losses through foolish speculations.

[*The TILTS look in dismay at each other ; and then from RATTLEBRAIN to the lawyer.*]

R. Why, what is all this? You must be jesting.

T. It must be a mistake, Mr. Sharpwit ; Rattlebrain assured me that I was left two hundred thousand pounds.

S. [*Aside.* Ho, ho :'] this made him such a worthy man.] [*Aloud.*] Neither a jest nor a mistake, Mr. Tilt, at least on my part, I am sorry to say.

T. Is it a jest of yours, Rattlebrain? A sorry jest indeed.

R. I will swear I overheard the words 'the whole of my property,' and then, 'to my well-beloved cousin Timothy Tilt.'

S. And after that the sum of five pounds to buy the ledger. Had you stayed till the close of the sentence, Mr. Rattlebrain, or paid heed to the beginning, your report would have been different. Another time you will wait awhile.

R. I will never run in such haste to tell a man that he has a fortune ; you may depend on that. I am very sorry Tilt—exceedingly sorry to have made such a mistake. I am sure I—I—I thought I was doing all for the best.

[*Aside.*] I had better be off at once before they say any more. If I sneak away no one will remark my going. It was a sad mistake, indeed [*Sneaks off, looking very foolish.*].

T. [*warmly*] I must see the will, sir: this must be looked into.

S. Here is a copy of the will, which you can examine at once, wherein you will see that the deceased, with the exception of one or two trifling legacies, has left the whole of his property to erect and maintain a mad-house in his native county.

T. [*Looking over the will.*] He was mad himself, sir; downright mad to make such a will: I shall contest it, as his next of kin.

S. As you please, Mr. Tilt; but, as a friend, I warn you that his executors can bring full proof of his sanity.

T. [*In a rage.*] Sane, sir! he could not be sane to make such a will as that. An iron-hearted curmudgeon! A stingy old miser! A close-handed, griping old dotard! A wretch formed of skin and bones, without one feeling of natural affection; who starved himself, and his whole household, down to the very mice!

S. This of your esteemed and respected cousin—the worthy, the very worthy man—the humane—the liberal—the kind-hearted? Surely there must be some mistake.

T. Mistake, indeed!—I tell you he was

a sordid, base-minded curmudgeon—an iron-souled miser. I cast him off—I disown him for my cousin.

S. And the monument, Mr. Tilt, shall I speak to the executors about the monument?

T. It shall be a monument to record his evil qualities. No, sir; tell the executors that I intend to dispute the will.

S. That will be a second mistake. Think better of it—be calm. Good morning. He was such a worthy man! [Exit SHARFWIT.

T. Be calm, indeed!—Who can be calm under such circumstances? An avaricious old wretch! I will go and consult Catchem, directly. How could Rattlebrain make such a mistake?

[Exit.

Mrs. T. Such a mistake, indeed! No presentation for you, Sophy; no titled husband.—Well if you get any husband at all; for men think of nothing but money now-a-days. We must go and see if we cannot turn your silk dress again. Horrid old wretch! Such a mistake! I will not go into mourning for him, I am determined. Such a mistake!

[Exeunt MRS. TILT and her DAUGHTERS.

FINAL.

PART I.

FINE-

CHARACTERS.

LADY YORK.
MRS. DE MONTMORENCY.
CAPTAIN BELLANI.
LIEUT. FINIKIN.
MR. PLAYFAIR.

PART II.

ALL.

MR. GOLD.
MRS. GOLD.
MISS GOLD.
MR. SAY.

PART III.

FINAL.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
MR. PLAYER.
MISS. RICH.
MISS CLARA RICH.
MISS FANNY RICH.

PART I.

LADY YORK, MRS. DE MONTMORENCY, CAPT. BELLANI, LIEUT. FINIKIN, MR. PLAYFAIR.
The ladies take graceful attitudes. The military gentlemen arrange their hair, glancing at a mirror.

Mrs. de M. Such an impertinence ! A letter from a lady with whom I exchanged visits at Brighton, requesting me to call on Mrs. Jones in Baker Street. The idea of my calling on a Mrs. Jones in Baker Street !

Capt. B. Very impertinent, 'pon honour. Call on a Mrs. Jones in Baker Street. Ha ! ha ! ha ! [*laughs affectedly.*] the idea of such a thing ! No wonder the ancient blood of the Montmorencis runs up to fever height at the bare thought. What is the creature that she should propose such a thing !

Mrs. de M. Some hundredth cousin, perhaps, of some Jew, who has lent money to the spend-

thrift son of my Brighton acquaintance, as she hints that the wish had come from him. There are daughters, it seems, who sing, play, and act charades.

Lady Y. Oh, dear ! Country girls with red arms, and redder faces, thumping the piano as cooks thump steaks, and romping through a character, like a Hoyden at a May-day wake.

Lieut. F. And squalling *di tanti palpiti*, like a fishwoman crying mackerel. Oh, horrible ! your Ladships quite makes me shudder. My dear Mrs. Montmorency, there being daughters, I really must put my veto on your calling. They will be asking you to introduce them to me ; perhaps even expecting me to bow to them in the Park, or dance with them at your parties. An utter impossibility—the bare idea has given me a greater shock than an earthquake. It could not be thought of. We never bow to country dowdies : we leave that to the infantry. A hussar could not chance with a Jemima Jones from Baker Street, could he, Bellani ?

B. Most assuredly not. He would deserve to be drummed out of the regiment if he did ; but the times are getting dreadfully democratic distinctions fading away like the dissolving views—the land-marks of twenty generations washed away by the advancing tide of parvenuism. The foot are absolutely placing themselves, on an equality with the horse ; and the dragoons setting up as pendants to the guards.

P. For which they deserve to be pendant, Eh?

Capt. B. [*Contemptuously to Finikin.*] Was that what they call a pun? Where does the vulgar fellow come from?

Lieut. F. [*Glancing over his shoulder with infinite contempt at Playfair.*] Probably from the Joneses in Baker Street. The Hussars never pun: we leave those things to wits, and authors, and such sort of people.

B. Precisely so; but, 'pon honour, there is no keeping such people in their proper places. the canaille thrust themselves in everywhere now; and the power of being exclusive is passing from us. Wits and authors used to keep to their garrets, a fitting domicile; but since fashion has condescended to put her golden pen to paper, and stain her aristocratic fingers with the ebon fluid, all ranks and distinctions have been done away with. Such things should be put a stop to: they will be the ruin of the country.

P. No doubt of that. Wits and authors should maintain their former exalted position; and not descend to mingle with those on the ground floor of intellect.

Lieut. F. [*Glancing with great disdain at Playfair.*] Yes; the canaille will intrude themselves everywhere now. One cannot go abroad in peace, the steamers smell so abominably of tallow and yellow soap from the numbers of grocer's wives and daughters on board. A

year's manufacture of Eau de Cologne would not purify them.

Mrs. de M. Oh, horrid ! And then the vulgar creatures look at you, as if one of themselves, from chancing to be on board the same packet ; thinking, if they can copy your dress, that they can attain your air—that something which none can attain.

Lady Y. Exactly so. It is dreadful ; and then some even add the impertinence of addressing you. The last time I crossed from Calais to Dover, a young clerk, or some such thing, had the impudence to adjust my cloak, pick up my handkerchief, blown down by the wind, and ask if I liked the sea, seeming to think he might make acquaintance with me if he pleased.

P. Very kind and attentive of the young man : I am glad to find politeness is coming into fashion again with one sex, at least.

Lady Y. Impertinence ! fashion, and a clerk ! they should not be named in the same breath. Would you have me form acquaintance with all the canaille on board a steamer ?

P. A civil bow ; and a few civil words would do you no harm.

Lady Y. [*with hauteur.*] I count it impertinent in a stranger, not one of us, to address me and never make travelling acquaintances.

F. Your Ladyship acts with your usual wisdom. We never make acquaintances with

the chance medley of a steamer, or table d'hôte ; but count it a duty to be exclusive, and keep the vulgar crowd at a distance.

Capt. B. That is if you can, but that is more easily said than done. Pon honor, the impertinence of the middle classes is intolerable, particularly on board the steamers, where the vulgar creatures think themselves your equals, and justified in addressing you, because they pay the same fare. Really the Guards must give up travelling, unless they can be secured from the impertinence of the mob. There should be steamers kept only for the aristocracy.

P. A maritime Almack's.

Capt. B. Precisely : and then one would not be subject to the intrusive remarks of no one knows whom.

P. Better let Englishmen stay at home, and hide their pride, if they will not subdue it ; not roll themselves up in a prickly ball like a hedgehog, if a stranger do but look at them. An Englishman's appetite is spoilt if a stranger presume to recommend a dish ! Pooh ! Pooh ! Ladies and gentlemen, all travellers are made of the same flesh and blood ; and if a cat may look at a king, it is hard if a man may not speak to a man, seeing that you have tongues alike, and the same power formed them. There is no Almack's in the grave ; and the worms are not exclusive.

Mrs. de M. [*shrinking.*] Mr. Playfair, I declare you quite made me shudder with your democratic opinions.

Lady Y. You are a leveller, 'a chartist, or worse.

P. Much worse, my dear madam; one who tells the truth, and warns his countrymen that in the new foreign dictionaries it will be written—Englishman—a proud, sulky, frowning, fault-finding animal. Fine talking and acting won't do in the present day, when half our nobility are beggars, or enriched by intermarriages with plebeians; and when the lower orders are advancing with gigantic strides in the march of mind.

Mrs. de M. March of intellect, indeed! What has mind to do with fashion?

P. [*smiling.*] Many a true word is spoken in jest. Fashion is exclusive of sense and good feeling.

Capt. B. Ha! ha! ha! The idea of reading and writing making a low-born fellow one of us. The Guards never read.

P. So I thought; therefore I am reading them a lecture.

Mrs. de M. Only blues attend lectures, and yours is levelling, absolutely revolutionary. You will be expecting me next to visit the Joneses, in Baker Street, and procure them tickets for Almack's.

P. Why not? You may go further and fare worse. The Joneses are an ancient family in Wales, as ancient, or it may be more so, than the Montmorencys, and right royally descended.

Mrs. de M. They may be descended from king Lud, or Jack the Giant Killer; but they can never belong to the élite.

P. Why so? they are clever, amiable, and accomplished.

Lady Y. So are many poodles; but still they are not fit companions for my Bijou; to make them so, they require that indescribable something, which would be hopeless to endeavour to make you understand.

P. Quite hopeless, even with your Ladyship's extraordinary powers of description: I can only comprehend thus much—that an exclusive counts impertinence a duty, talks fine, and is neither clever, amiable, nor accomplished.

Capt. B. We never talk fine: it is vulgar—fit only for the canaille: we only seek to keep people in their proper places.

P. Scott used to say that if each would reform one, our reformation would be completed.

Capt. B. [*aside.* Impertinent !] Who was Scott? In the foot, I conclude. We never associate with the foot.

Lieut. F. Oh ! no, we always cut the infantry. My dear Mrs. de Montmorency, will you allow me to accompany you to Chalon's ? He is an aristocratic painter, worthy of painting us, and should never defile his pencil by employing it on the vulgar crowd. I think I shall sit to him.

P. [*Aside.*] Vain coxcomb ! he shall smart for this finery : a rub may improve him. [*aloud.*] Stay an instant, Finikin ; your uncle the dry-salter at Liverpool, who lent the money for your military out-fit, bade me say that he hoped you remembered your bill became due on the tenth.

Mrs. M. [*Drawing back in horror and in a loud aside.*] A Montmorency associating with the nephew of a dry-salter !

Capt. B. One of the guards walking arm-in-arm with the nephew of a dry-salter ! We must cut the Hussars, as well as the infantry ; [*glancing contemptuously at Finikin.*]

Lieut. F. [*Endeavouring to master his confusion and assume a lofty air.*] I don't understand you, Mr. Playfair : it's the custom of vulgar people to make impertinent remarks, and impertinent claims.

P. An aphorism exemplified.

Lieut. F. [*Aside.*] (May the duns worry that old fellow : there is no putting him down.) [*aloud*] Permit me, my dear Madam. [*He offers his arm to Mrs. de Montmorency.*]

Mrs. de M. [*Sweeping past him with a lofty air.*]
Excuse me, sir. [*Exit Mrs. de M.*

Lady Y. [*Passing Finikin with a stately hauteur.*] There is no keeping clear of Parvenus now - a - days. Butcher boys become attaches, and dry - salters' nephews hussars. Pah! the very roses smell of *les gens du peuple*. [*Exit Lady York.*

P. [*Looking after her ladyship.*]

“Old woman, old woman, old woman says I!
Where are you going so prodigiously high?”

They might as well visit the Joneses. What would her ladyship's grandfather, the little grocer in Cheapside, think, if he could see his granddaughter so very fine? It is always those of low birth, and mean minds, who show the greatest pretension.

Capt. B. Is this really true of Finikin, and her ladyship?

P. As true as a Guardsman.

Capt. B. Then there really is no avoiding the canaille. The Guards must give up all society. Was her ladyship's grandfather really a grocer?

P. So I have heard; but you should know best, your grandfather, the Chandler, having resided next door.

Capt. B. [*Aside.*] Impertinent fellow! he seems to know every thing that should be unknown. If this get wind at the mess, the

will turn me on the plea of not having mutton lights. I must take it as a joke: Finikin betrayed the truth by his vexation. Ha! ha! ha! [*laughs affectedly*] very good, Playfair, very good, 'pon honor, a capital joke; but I am not to be taken in like the others. I know who my grandfather was.

P. [*Significantly.*] And so may your mess, if you play fine again. Good morning. Here is a fine lesson. [*Exit Playfair.*]

Capt. B. I wonder if that impertinent bore will talk of my grandfather. If he should, there would be a fine kettle of fish. We have all been fine with a vengeance. [*Exit Bellani.*]

PART II.

MR., MRS., AND MISS GOLD.

—*Enter MR. SAY.*

S. Oh! my dear Gold, I am so delighted to see you; and you too, ladies; [*rubbing his hands.*] I have a thousand things to tell you. Such things! do you know they talked of little else at the party last night! Gold; Gold; Gold; nothing but Gold. Gold's house, Gold's horses, Gold's carriage, Gold's family, and then Gold himself. Such things, my dear fellow! If you had but been there!

G. I wish I had; but, some how or other if I overhear a thing it is never pleasant; some sneer or sarcasm, or something of the sort. As the poet truly says:

“Envy doth merit, like its shade pursue.”

It is one of the penalties of greatness to be

abused by inferiors, so I must make up my mind to that, I suppose. We cannot have every thing in this world. But tell me, what did they say of my house? No fault to be found with that, I think. Not that I care in the least for praise, only one gets an idea sometimes from hearing the opinions of others. How did they like my house?

S. Oh! one, in the words of the poet, said it was—

“Large, and strong, and unimproved around.”

G. [*with hauteur*] Large, and grand decidedly. It would not do for a man of my vast substantial wealth to run up a frippery fly-away villa: it would not be in keeping. What did others say? That must have been some envious neighbour.

S. Oh! another said he had taken it for the union poor-house, and sent a pauper to ask admission; whilst a third called it a smelting house for Gold. Very good, that last, was not it? Ha! ha! ha! there was such a laugh—you might have heard it for miles even along the rail-road, with a train passing by at full speed.

G. Some fools will laugh at any thing.

S. Fool! come, come, it was a clever fellow who said that: and they were clever people who laughed, too. Laugh and grow fat, you know,

is the old proverb; and thin people, like thin wines, are apt to get sour. Well, then, they discussed your horses.

G. [*With great self-complacency.*] And what did they say of them? No fault to be found with them, I imagine.

S. One said they were of the Carthaginian breed; another said they were large and slow, like their master; a third said you had chosen them huge and dull on purpose to match the house; and a fourth said they must be strong to carry heavy Gold. Then there was such another laugh. Very good, that last, was not it? Ha! ha! ha! I cannot think of it even without laughing. Heavy Gold! Ha! ha! ha! but you don't seem amused. Don't you take?

G. [*In high dudgeon.*] I take it as a piece of impertinence in those who said, or in him who repeats it.

S. Impertinence to repeat it, indeed! Why, my dear Gold, you forget; you told me to repeat what I had heard. You did not care for praise, you said; but it was as well to hear the opinions of others, as you could gain an idea from them sometimes. Now I count an idea worth its weight in gold.

G. There are some ideas so light and frothy that they carry no weight at all.

S. Aye; but then, sometimes, like the froth at the top of the trifle, they indicate a richer

material beneath. I have a hundred people to see this morning, but I must tell you, first, all I heard last night about you and yours. I count it my duty, as a true friend, to repeat all I hear, that you may understand exactly in what estimation you are held by the world.

G. [*Aside.*] I hate such friends. That fellow shall never enter my doors again. Who wishes to hear the evil that is said of one [*Aloud.*] Oh! you need not trouble yourself to tell me any more. I could draw a bill for a hundred thousand pounds and get it cashed at any bank in England, and that is quite enough for me; it shows in what estimation I am held by men of worth and substance; and as for the opinions of penniless fools—who cares for them?

S. Oh, but they were men of sense and wealth.

G. I should doubt that, whatever they may strive to seem: their opinions prove them to be deficient in judgment; and I have no desire to hear more of their conversation.

S. But you have not heard more than half yet, and I make it a point of conscience to tell all.—They talked of your marriage next.

G. [*Brightening.*] No fault to be found with that, I believe; in that, even malice and envy can find nothing to blame.

S. But taste may. Clavers says, with its

brown and yellow liveries and lining, it resembles a gingerbread coach with gilding.

G. [*With anger.*] Brown and yellow was the livery of my respected father, and grandfather; I doubt if Mr. Clavers can claim any livery at all. I never saw his father on 'Change.

S. Ah, Clavers said a good thing about that. Some one said you were a great man on 'Change, on which Clavers remarked, *Mais nous avons changé tout cela*, and he is going to play fine gentleman,—there was such a laugh.

G. As I said before, fools will laugh at any thing. Clavers has neither sense nor taste. My carriage cost five hundred pounds, which is more than Clavers's yearly income, I suspect. That statement will settle the point. Even Count D'Orsay said it was unique.

S. And added, he hoped it would remain so.

G. Yes, because he cannot afford one like it himself. I wish to hear no more on the subject.

S. Oh! but I must tell you all, if I can remember it. I count it a matter of conscience to tell all I hear reported of my friends. Let me see, there was something about yellow dirt, and Sir Gropus and his wife; and I suppose it must have been very witty, for every one laughed; but I have forgotten that.

G. It does not matter. Pray don't trouble yourself to remember.

S. Oh, but I hate to forget any thing that is said of my friends, it seems so unkind.

G. [*aside.*] Idiot! impertinent idiot! He shall never dine with me again; I am resolved on that. It was but last week he had turtle and venison here.

S. Who was Sir Gropus? An ancestor of yours?

G. [*very loftily.*] My ancestor was Sir Carmichael Gold, who had the care of the Mint in the time of Charles the First.

S. Then he had cause to rue it, I doubt not. If of the same portly size as yourself, there was more gold without than within, I suspect. Ha! ha! ha!—that is not so bad, is it? I will run off and tell that to Clavers: I want to tell him what Milward said of him last night, for I count it a matter of conscience to tell my friends all I hear of them. So good day, good day, ladies. [*Goes out muttering*] I wish I could remember about Sir Gropus, though. Perhaps I may on the stairs, and then I can run back. [*Half closes the door, and then returns.*] Dear me, I have not said one word to you ladies. How rude you must have thought me; and I heard a great deal about you, too, my dear Mrs. Gold; but the having forgotten about Sir Gropus put me out. However, I will tell it you all now. They were talking about your picture in the Exhibition, and some one said, “What colour-

ing! it surpasses nature." "But is a vast specimen of art," says Clavers. Then they spoke of the rich bloom on your cheek, vying with your crimson robe.

Mrs. G. [who colours through her rouge.] No more, Mr. Say, I beg; I have no wish to be criticised second-hand.

S. I must tell you all, my dear Mrs. Gold; I always make a point of doing that. Some said, you were trying to look handsome with all your might; and Clavers added, you had not succeeded; on which I remarked that you deserved some credit for the attempt, at any rate. I am often obliged to defend you thus, I assure you.

Mrs. G. [coldly.] Pray do not trouble yourself to do so again.

S. Oh! but I must; it is a part of my nature to defend my friends, and tell them all that is said of them. I think that was all they said about you, though, last night, so I will run off to Clavers—[*He goes to the door, and then returns.*] Oh! no, I forgot, it was not quite all; there was something about your holding out your dress, as much as to say—this is real Genoa velvet, and I gave three guineas a yard for it. See how rich I am! Well, that really was all. Good

He goes to the door, then returns as before.] Yes, all about you; but now I remember there was something about Miss Gold. Must

not forget the young ladies: no, no [*with a chuckling laugh*].

Miss G. [*Eagerly, but with a mincing air.*] Well, what did they say of me? no harm I hope.

S. Oh! several things. One said you had had a narrow escape of being pretty, whilst another declared that you had been in no danger of that. Then they talked of your complexion; one said it was too yellow, on which a second remarked that he loved yellow gold. Very good that, was not it? Ha! ha! ha! there was such a laugh!

Miss G. [*Aside.*] What a stupid prosy old bore. Was that all?

S. All, oh! no—some one hinted that you might turn out light gold; but Clavers said no, he would answer for your being heavy enough. On which Marsham held up his hands exclaiming, ‘Oh! that this too, too solid gold would melt!’ Well now I think that really was all. So good day once more. | *Exit Say.*

G. Good day indeed! He may chance to find it a bad day for him. No more turtle and venison, he may rest assured of that. “Make it a matter of conscience to tell all;”—as if people wanted to know all that their enemies said of them. I will give instant orders that he shall never be admitted again.

Mrs. G. Pray do, my dear, an impudent creature. Trying to look handsome indeed! He must tell all that people say of one.

Miss G. Yes, pray do, papa. Never let him come here again. A narrow escape of being pretty indeed! [*tossing her head.*]

[*Re-enter Say in haste.*]

Mr. G. [*very sharply.*] What now?

S. I was not quite sure I had told you all. I thought I had remembered something more in the hall; but I seem to have forgotten it again now.

G. [*angrily.*] No matter: no matter: it will be a loss to none.

S. Oh! I don't know that. I like to tell my friends all that is said of them [*he approaches the door, then turns again with a brightened look*] Ha! ha! ha! I remember now. I thought my memory could not be quite gone. It was about Sir Gropus. He is a cousin of the Pope's, or some such thing. And they said something about his wife too [*nodding to Mrs. Gold*]. Well now that is all; and I must be off.

G. Never to come here again, depend on that.

S. *opens the door again and thrusts in his head.*

G. [*in a rage.*] What, come again! Is not that all?

S. Yes, I thought I would just look in again to say that this is all, really all. [*Exit SAY.*]

[*Exeunt the GOLDS muttering.*]

All!

All!

All!

PART III.

Enter CAPTAIN HUNTER, who arranges his hair, whiskers, and stock, before a glass, surveying himself all the time with great self-complacency.

Capt. H. [conceitedly.] Yes, this will do ; that curl hangs languishingly over my left temple, giving to my speaking eye the power of Byron's poetry, and the bewitching softness of Moore's. These whiskers, too — their arrangement is inimitable. I am perfectly irresistible. [*Turning himself about before the glass.*] Stately courtesy mingled with fashionable ease. What female tongue can say me nay ? [*Sings,*]

“ I love, and am yours if you love me.”

Enter Player, unperceived.

P. Hey, day, Hunter ! playing the sentimental lover, instead of the bold dragoon !

Capt. H. [affectedly] Oh, yes, I can

“ Be every thing by turns.”

P. ‘ And nothing long.’ But come, to

confession—For what fair lady was that line intended? I see you are bent on conquest.

Capt. H. [conceitedly.] Why, I think I shall do. There are few ladies who would say me no, I suspect.

P. None, I should think. But who is to be the happy lady?

Capt. H. [confidentially.] Ah, there is the difficulty, my dear fellow. There are three sisters.

P. [laughing.] Three sisters; but you are not going to marry all three sisters, are you? That is against the law of the land, and very unfair towards us poor bachelors too.

Capt. H. No, no, my dear fellow :

“One wife for one husband is surely enough ;”

but the difficulty is to know which to choose.

P. Ay, yes; I see you are afraid lest the other two should take Prussic acid. You were always tender-hearted.

Capt. H. Why there is something in that, certainly; I should be sorry to cause the death of two worthy ladies, but if they should take Prussic acid, it would be no fault of mine, you know. One can't help being so irresistible.

P. Oh, certainly not. But which sister is it to be? I am impatient to hear all about it.

Capt. H. Why, my dear fellow, as I told you before, there is the difficulty. I could have any one of the three.

P. Yours must be desperate love ! About the fifty-fifth fancy you have had ; I suppose you will go on and make it up a hundred.

Capt. H. No, no, Player, this is more than a fancy ; this is a determination, and will be final.

P. Final ! Umph — we shall see. Do you toss up which to have ?

Capt. H. No ; matrimony is not a matter of chance with me, but of necessity and speculation. One of the sisters has sixty thousand pounds the others only a thousand or so.

P. Oh, now I comprehend : you choose the heiress, whichever she may be.

Capt. H. Exactly so. I think I should prefer the youngest, but I am not particular. The eldest is the handsomest, but she is rather too queen-like—too commanding : I like to be master in my own house. Then the second is a blue, writes verses, and all that sort of thing, and talks of the ologies ; whilst the youngest is quiet, and looks as if she would be very loving, and obedient ; and what can a man desire more than that ?

P. You know them, then ?

Capt. H. Yes, I have danced with all three ; but, not knowing which had the fortune, have taken care to shew no preference for either. I should be sorry to break the heart of any woman ; but if the dear creatures will fall in love with me, it is no fault of mine, you know,

but of Nature's, who made me what I am [*glancing conceitedly at the glass*].

Mr. P. [*laughing aside.*] Oh! certainly; you cannot possibly help being so irresistible. But what are the names of your graces?

Capt. H. The Misses Rich. Rich in name and rich in charms:—the one with the fortune I mean.

P. [*aside.* My cousins, as I live! I will, make mirth out of this for myself and them and mortification for that insufferable coxcomb.] Indeed! Fine girls—much admired; you had better try your chance at once; for they will be off for the continent in three days, and you have many rivals, who intend to propose before their departure.

Capt. H. [*conceitedly.*] Oh! as to rivals Player, I have no fear of them; but the mischief is, I have not made out which has the fortune. There ought to be a registry of the fortunes of all marriageable ladies.

P. And of all single gentlemen?

Capt. H. Why, that might not be quite so convenient. But do find out which is the heiress for me, there is a good fellow, for I cannot return to London unless I marry a fortune;—and what will Almack's be without me?

P. [*laughing.*] A waste of howling savages. Such a national misfortune must be averted. Dawson told me yesterday that he

had ascertained, from the best authority, that the sixty thousand pounds was to go to the eldest.

Capt. H. Dawson may be trusted in things of this sort ; I must only mind and be beforehand with him. I would rather it had been the youngest, but it is lucky I showed no preference.

P. Very lucky. But be speedy, lest another should bear off the prize.

Capt. H. I will propose within the hour. I am desperately in love with Miss Rich already—or her fortune.

P. Psha ! You would run after another heiress if she crossed your path.

Capt. H. No, no, I tell you : this is final.

P. Final ! Mind, keep to that, and don't stand shilly shally with the lady, but charge down upon her at once, and take her prisoner before she can rally. This is a favorite walk with the sisters, so I will leave you to the chance of a *tête-à-tête*, wishing you all the success you deserve.

Capt. H. I thank you ; and have no fear of success, now I know which is the heiress.

[*Exit* PLAYER.]

Capt. H. [*After surveying himself again at the glass and arranging his hair &c., in a conceited manner.*] Yes, yes ; fear of my success ! But I wish the fair Diana would appear. Let me think ; with that name and stately demean-

our, I must be classical, or sublime. Ah! here she comes, and looking most gracious." I will charge down upon her at once, as Player proposed, and overwhelm her: I think Diana had something to do with the moon.

[*Enter Miss RICH. The Captain rushing forward, addresses her in a bombastical tone.*]

Capt. H. Most beautiful Diana! huntress maid! thou Empress of the Skies! I bend the knee before thy shrine, vowing myself thy votary, thy slave. Accept my homage, and receive my vows.

Miss R. [*Looking down and shading her face with her handkerchief.*] Oh! Capt. Hunter, you startle—you confuse me. What am I to understand from these sublime expressions?

Capt. H. [*Aside.* Sublime! ay, I thought she could not resist them! she trembles—she's mine.] What should you understand, but that I lay my heart, my hand, and fortune at the feet of one rich in all charms? Your tender pity will receive my suit. [*Aside.* I do it well, she's won; but she must steady her voice ere she speaks. I knew no woman could resist me.]

Miss R. [*in confusion.*] And is it really so? [*sighs*] But the world says that you have loved so many.

Capt. H. The world lies, beautiful Diana; believe it not. I have had passing fancies in

my boyish days, but, trust me, never really loved till now.

Miss R. Ah ! If I could believe you ! but you will say the same to another within the day.

Capt. H. Believe me not so false. Have I not vowed that I can love but once ? If I win not a bride to day, I shall remain single all my life ; this is my final resolution.

Miss R. [*still looking down.*] But some have called you fortune-hunter.

Capt. H. Believe them not : I care not for base gold, it is the heart I seek to gain. [*Aside.* I must swear this. All things are fair in love and war, they say.]

Miss R. [*After a pause.*] If I could be quite sure of this—

Capt. H. I will swear it o'er and o'er again. This is the malice of some jealous rival.

Miss R. Well then—if you really seek not gold, but love—I—I—

Capt. H. [*in raptures.*] You consent—you grant my suit ? A million, million thanks. Let there be no delay. I shall count it an age to my wedding day. Let us arrange about the settlements immediately ; lawyers are so dilatory. I have a large estate in Ireland which I shall settle on you [*Aside.* I need not tell her it is an unprofitable bog, the possession of which is disputed.] It will be safer than money—land can't run away ; and then your sixty thousand pound

shall be placed out at good interest ; I will see to that, and manage every thing for you without any trouble.

Miss R. [*looking up in surprise.*] My sixty thousand pounds ? I have but three.

Capt. H. [*aside.* Ha ! she is saying this to try me.] You are pleased to jest, fair Dian ; and I too like a jest at fitting times ; but now we must be grave, talking of business as we are.

Miss R. It is the simple truth, and not a jest. But you look not for money, so it matters little.

Capt. H. Oh ! no, I look not for money [*aside.* Confusion ! Dawson has been deceived ! I must back out of this.] I merely mentioned what the world said you had ; you say you have but three.

Miss R. But three. My sister is the heiress, and not I ; but you care not for gold.

Capt. H. [*in some confusion*] Oh ! no ; but being the eldest, of course I concluded—
[*pauses.*]

Miss R. Me to be the heiress ; no, the money was left by aunt Clara to her godchild.

Capt. H. [*aside.* Clara ; that must be the second sister, as of course she was named after her aunt. Can I make Diana believe that I only wished her to intercede with this sister ? It is rather a desperate endeavour, but I must attempt it. She will be sadly disappointed, poor thing ; I hope she won't take Prussic acid, but it can't be helped. Now for a bold face ;

she will keep her own counsel for shame, whatever she may think.] How good, how kind, most beautiful Diana, to promise thus to aid my suit with your fair sister !

Miss R. [*in wonder.*] My sister ! Captain Hunter ?

Capt. H. Yes ! your fair sister Clara. My heart has long been hers : she must have seen it from the first time we met.

Miss R. [*with hauteur.*] Indeed ! I never suspected this, and your late words were a declaration of your love—

Capt. H. [*interrupting her.*] For her ; and a petition to your goodness to promote my suit ; which you most kindly promised. Where is she ? I would know my fate at once ?

Miss R. {She comes this way ; I will take my leave.

Capt. H. Farewell, kind sister Diana.

[*Exit MISS RICH.*

That was cleverly done ; and she did not upbraid, as many would ; but she is too proud for that. With what a stately demeanour she swept by me. Now for the poetical, or the learned, if I can manage either : she too looks gracious.

[*Enter MISS CLARA RICH.*

Capt. H. [*rushes up to her, looking sentimental.* [*Aside.* I do not know how to begin, but I must say something. Only spice the

flattery high enough, and no one cares for its sense.] Sweet Clara of the beaming eyes, how have I longed to look upon thy starlight loveliness. Let those soft orbs dart joy to this sad breast; smile on thy suppliant and thy slave.

"I love and am yours, if you love me."

Miss C. [*looking down*] Ah! Captain Hunter,

"Men were deceivers ever."

Capt. H. Some men may have been false, there is no denying that; but none who have loved as I love now,

"One pure, and perfect crysolite."

[*aside*. She cannot resist that.] I swear by all thy charms, I cannot love another.

Miss C. Ah! Captain Hunter, to how many have you sworn the same?

Capt. H. [*aside*. Having begun to lie, I must go through with it, and lie on like a lover.] To none have I so sworn; to none will I so ever swear. If you reject my suit, I will throw myself before the next rail-way train, and sacrifice myself to love and you. This is my final resolution.

Miss C. That would be sad; but so very sentimental. And then I would write a beautiful epitaph, and go and weep over your tomb. Your love and fate would be celebrated in after ages.

Capt. H. [*aside*. Is the girl mad? Who cares for after ages? Epitaph indeed! She shall pay

for this when my wife.] And can you be so cruel as to condemn me to this? I go; but my death will be on your conscience—my ghost will haunt you night and day.

Miss C. No, no, Captain Hunter, don't go; that would be so dreadful; stop a little—perhaps I may—

Capt. H. Nay, say that you will on the instant, or I go—I hear a train now.

Miss C. [*in confusion.*] Well then—if I must—but—

Capt. H. No but—you are mine—you have said so. [*aside.* Nothing like decision; now to speak about the settlement.]

Miss C. But I am so flurried—you must give me time.

Capt. H. No, no; there can be no waste of time; I shall know no peace till I claim you as my own. I shall go raving mad, and talk wild nonsense to the moon, if you delay. You have neither father nor mother, I believe; so I must speak of the settlements to you: and then off to the lawyer.

Miss C. Settlements! what need of settlements, if you love me for myself, and seek not fortune?

Capt. H. Ah! true, my beautiful—my high minded Clara! Why think of the dross of the earth—whilst the rich ore of love is ours? Yes, I love you, and you alone. Well then; I will

trouble you not with matters of business, only give me authority to act, and the sixty thousand pounds shall be put out at good interest.

Miss C. [in surprise.] What sixty thousand pounds?

Capt. H. The sixty thousand pounds which was left you by your godmother.

Miss C. You must mean my younger sister; my godmother left me nothing.

Capt. H. [in dismay] Nothing! have you no fortune?

Miss C. Only three thousand pounds—the same as Diana: but you seek not fortune—you love me for myself alone.

Capt. H. [in confusion.] Oh! certainly. But you are named after your godmother. [*aside.* I wonder if she is trying me.]

Miss C. No; after my cousin. Aunt Clara left me nothing.

Capt. H. [aside then] Fanny is the heiress after all; my favorite Fanny: I must get out of this somehow.]

Miss C. [in tender tones.] What is the matter, Captain Hunter? You look pale—are you ill?

Capt. H. Yes — no — a sudden spasm. [*aside* How shall I get out of this scrape?]

Miss C. Spasms — those are very alarming things; but you are better now, I see.

Capt. H. Yes, yes; quite well now—if you would leave me to myself a little.

Miss C. Since you wish it ; but you will follow soon. In the mean time I will mention your proposal to my uncle, who will talk to you about the settlements. Farewell ; take care of yourself—for my sake.

[*Exit MISS CLARA with a sentimental look.*]

Capt. H. Tell her uncle, and he will talk to me about settlements ! I must be off—I see how it will be else. I must either lose my life, for her uncle is one of the best shots in England, or marry a poor wife, and live upon boiled mutton and turnips all my days. Pah ! the very thought makes me ill. Ill-fated wretch that I am ! if she had but refused me ! But who would refuse me ? [*glancing at the glass*] I am ruined, undone [*looks round in despair, then looks more hopeful*]. No, not quite ruined either. Here is Fanny, my love, my heiress. If I can but persuade her to elope with me it will all be well. Then what a triumph over her sisters, who will be spiteful of course ; but I must lose no time, and here she comes.

Enter FANNY RICH.

Capt. H. [*springing forward to meet her.*] Fanny, my sweet Fanny ! my life ! my love ! what a happy chance is this ! I lay my hand, my heart, my fortune at your feet. Come fly with me far from this slanderous world.

Miss Fanny [*smiling*]. Stop, stop, Captain Hunter, I cannot fly without wings, and where are they to be procured ?

Capt. H. Love will supply them, my dear Fanny.

Miss F. I thought he was a little cunning boy, who shot sharp arrows instead of selling wings. What is love?

Capt. H. [*Laying his hand on his heart.*] Love is that which I feel for you, and you alone.

Miss F. [*archly.*] How many ladies have you said that to this morning?

Capt. H. [*Aside.* I must tell more lies; women should not ask such questions.] To none, sweet Fanny, have I said it before; to none will I ever say it again. Do not condemn me to despair.

Miss F. [*Seeming to doubt.*] If I were quite certain that you could never say the same to another—

Capt. H. I swear it: this shall be my final declaration. If you refuse me I will shoot myself at once.

Miss F. No, no; you must not think of that.

Capt. H. Then you consent to be mine, dearest, adorable Fanny! Let us away to Gretna on the instant; I cannot submit to a delay, and envious minds may part us yet if we fly not at once.

Miss F. Nay, don't be in such a hurry, I must consider a little first. Elopements are vulgar, and I like cake and orange flowers.

Capt. H. [*sentimentally*] Ah! love, you are jesting now.

Miss F. Perhaps I am ; but are you in earnest ? Do you really love me so much, so very, very much ?

Capt. H. More than my life.

Miss F. And you don't care for money ! and you love me for myself !

Capt. H. [*Aside.* I can't be in the wrong box again here ! No, no, she must be the heiress ; and is only trying me, and so I will be bold.] Away with the thought. How can I think of money, when I possess yourself, so far above the whole world's wealth !

Miss F. Then you won't mind living on mutton chops, and fried eggs and bacon, all the year round ?

Capt. H. Not as long as I eat with them you. So fly with me, my life, my only love.

Miss F. [*Hesitating*] Your only love ? are you sure you have not said the same to any one else ? My sisters—you paid the same attention to them as to myself.

Capt. H. Only to blind them, love, for, in their envious spite, I saw they would have parted us. I love but you, and you alone ; and never loved or sought another.

Enter PLAYER, MISS RICH, and CLARA, unperceived by CAPT. HUNTER.

P. Oh !

Miss R. Oh !

Miss C. Oh !

Capt. H. [turning round and holding up his hands in dismay.] Ruined! undone! [he attempts to rush out, but they stand between him and the door.]

Miss F. [laughing.] What, fly without me, Captain Hunter, whom you love for myself alone?

Miss C. What, rush by me without a word of that love which you feel for me, and me alone?

Miss R. What, desert my sister with whom you implored me to intercede?

P. What, making love, Hunter, to all three of my cousins, at once, when you told me but now that—

“ One wife for one husband was surely enough ! ”

This is not the conduct of a man of honour, and my uncle will insist on an explanation ; and, perhaps, more.

Capt. H. [aside.] I am in for it now ; what will become of me ?

Miss R. What, making love to two women, when you told me that your proposal to me was final?

Miss C. Yes ; and that to me was to be final ?

Miss F. Final !

P. Yes, final.

Capt. H. So they are all final ! If I get out of this scrape, I will never propose to another woman as long as I live.

P. Not till you hear of three more sisters with sixty thousand pounds between them.

[*Capt. Hunter tries to rush out amid the laughter of the whole party.*]

Miss R. Final !

Miss C. Final ! Go and throw yourself under the next train !

Miss F. Final ! Are you going to shoot yourself on the instant !

P. Final ! Make haste ; my uncle is at your heels. What will Almack's do without you ?

[*Capt. H. bursts through the line, and — Exit.*]

P. So this is his final leave-taking ! May the final fate of all fortune-hunters be as amusing !

[*Exeunt, laughing.*]



